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FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

MOROCCO

PART 59

JANUARY TO JUNE 1926

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

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Further Correspondence respecting Morocco.

Part 59.

CHAPTER I.—FRANCO-SPANISH MILITARY OPERATIONS AND NEGOTIATIONS WITH ABD-EL-KRIM.

[W 131/5/28] No 1.

The Marquess of Crewe to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(*Received January* 6.)

(No. 18.)

Sir, *Paris, January* 5, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that on the 30th December last the Government laid before Parliament a Bill authorising the grant of certain supplementary credits, including a sum of between 300 and 400 million francs to cover expenses incurred owing to the military operations in Morocco.

2. During the debate which took place, the question of the policy to be pursued by the Government in Morocco was raised by M. Gachin, the Communist leader, who, taking as his text the presence of Captain Gordon-Canning in Paris, urged the Government to conclude peace at once with Abd-el-Krim. A similar plea was made later in the debate by M. Renaudel, the Socialist leader; unlike M. Cachin, who professed to regard the question purely from the point of view of the Riffians, M. Renaudel maintained that, unless peace were made in the immediate future, many fresh casualties were bound to be suffered by the French troops.

3. The raising of the question of Morocco allowed M. Briand to make an important announcement regarding the policy which his Government intended to pursue with regard to Abd-el-Krim. After repeating all the usual arguments, explaining that it was not France who had been the aggressor and reiterating that France had no desire to occupy any territory which lay outside the present frontiers of the French zone of Morocco, M. Briand turned to the question of the desirability of making peace with Abd-el-Krim, a question which had been brought into considerable prominence by the visit of Captain Gordon-Canning to Paris.

4. Dealing first with Captain Gordon-Canning's mission, the President of the Council declared that he was unable to regard this gentleman as a serious representative of Abd-el-Krim, and that he feared that to enter into negotiations with him would only lead to difficulties and prolong the present situation. There was no reason to believe that Abd-el-Krim was at the present moment anxious to make peace, at all events on terms which could possibly be considered by the French and Spanish Governments. At the same time that Captain Canning was being sent to Paris, documents had been seized in Algeria and Tunis showing that Abd-el-Krim was endeavouring to stir up the native population in those countries against the French, and it was well-known that a similar propaganda was being carried on by the Riffian agents in Egypt and Syria. Such action on the part of Abd-el-Krim was not likely to convince the French Government of the genuineness of his peaceful professions.

5. Nor was Captain Gordon-Canning himself above suspicion. A letter written by Captain Gordon-Canning had come into the possession of the French authorities; in this letter it was suggested that Abd-el-Krim should undertake in

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writing to accept the peace conditions which Captain Gordon-Canning had made known to him. This undertaking would not be considered as binding upon Abd-el-Krim, but would enable Captain Canning to compel the French Government, thanks to the intervention of public opinion, to agree to the terms suggested by Abd-el-Krim. From this letter it was clear, declared M. Briand, that Captain Gordon-Canning hoped that he would be able to persuade the press and other organs of public opinion in France to bring pressure to bear upon the French Government. To enter into negotiations with Captain Gordon-Canning would have been fatal, since it would have been playing into the hands of Abd-el-Krim himself and could only have resulted in strengthening the latter's determination to continue the war. Furthermore, the conditions, which Captain Canning had stated to M. Blanc at Rabat to be those formulated by Abd-el-Krim, were entirely unacceptable, at all events as regards the territorial arrangements proposed. Quite apart from the demand made that the area under Spanish protectorate should be restricted to the zones of Mellila, Ceuta and Larrache, and that Tetuan should become the capital of the Riff, Abd-el-Krim demanded that the frontier between the Riff and the French zone should run on the west close to the Fez–Tangier Railway; on the south, the frontier should run from Ouezzan to the Ouergo, and then apparently along that river, leaving Kifane to the Riffs and Bab Morouj to the French. (In this connection, I note that in the document communicated by Captain Canning to His Majesty's consul-general at Tangier, which was enclosed in your despatch No. 4214 of the 23rd December, the demands to be made by Abd-el-Krim from the French as regards the boundaries between their respective zones were not stated). Such conditions were quite unacceptable and would render the French position in Northern Morocco untenable.

6. Having thus explained the reasons for his refusal to receive Captain Gordon-Canning, the President of the Council then discussed the more general question of the desirability of entering into peace negotiations with Abd-el-Krim. He began by pointing out that no blame could possibly be attached to the French or Spanish Governments for any failure to enter into negotiations. After the Franco-Spanish terms had been drawn up in July last, two duly qualified plenipotentiaries had been sent to Mellila, and Abd-el-Krim had been informed that, if he wished to enter into negotiations, then he had only to send a representative to Mellila to get into touch with the French and Spanish delegates. Abd-el-Krim had, however, taken no notice whatever of this Franco-Spanish *démarche*, other than to renew his offensive measures. He had been fully aware of the conditions drawn up by the French and Spanish Governments at Madrid, all the more so because they had been broadcast by M. Painlevé in his speech at Nîmes in October last. He had, however, continued to disregard them, and all blame for the continuance of the war must in justice be attached to him.

7. But, M. Briand asked, was there any reason why the French and Spanish Governments should continue to regard Abd-el-Krim as the sole person with whom peace could be made? Would it not be more logical and more likely to lead to a fruitful result to enter into negotiations with the actual tribes themselves? Abd-el-Krim himself was only the leader of one small tribe, and the majority of his present supporters had been merely terrorised into subjection and had no real feelings of loyalty for him. The French Government had, therefore, determined to disregard Abd-el-Krim and to try to make direct arrangements with the different tribes in the Riff in order to bring an end to the hostilities. Such direct negotiations were, in fact, now going on, and from the manner in which they were proceeding there was every reason to hope that they would in the end be successful.

8. The present military situation in the Riff was far more satisfactory than it was a few months ago; practically no real military operations were being carried on, and the actual front was now held not by French troops but by native Moroccan levies. Many dissident families had made their submission to the French and returned to their former allegiance, and it could safely be said that both Fez and the communications between Fez and Algeria were now perfectly safe. This improvement in the military situation had a very considerable effect upon the *moral* of the natives of the Riff, and it was on this account that M. Briand was encouraged to think that negotiations with these tribes were likely to have a successful issue. Were these negotiations to be abandoned and were further attempts to be made to deal with Abd-el-Krim, then the latter's prestige would receive a fillip, the natives would return to his support, and the prospects of a further struggle would be greatly increased. This was a further reason which had dictated his refusal to receive Captain Gordon-Canning.

9. M. Briand also pointed out that France was bound by her engagements to Spain not to make any separate arrangement with Abd-el-Krim, and that it was useless for the latter to try and play off one party against the other. At the same time, however, the President of the Council explained that he had no intention of allowing France to be forced against her will to continue the war purely for the benefit of Spain.

10. M. Briand's speech was greeted with much applause and has been received with general approval in the press The supplementary credits were voted without a division, but from a passage in M. Renaudel's speech it seems probable that, had the question been put to the vote, the Socialists would have divided against the Government.

11. It would appear from M. Briand's declaration that the French Government take a very optimistic view of the situation. They seem confident that Abd-el-Krim is losing his grip over the tribes in the Riff, and that these latter may be persuaded by skilful propaganda to abandon his cause and make terms with the French and Spanish Governments. In this way, the French Government apparently hope to eliminate Abd-el-Krim as a personal factor altogether. In order to obtain this result, M. Briand seems to prefer to allow the present situation to continue for some little time longer rather than to enter into negotiations with Abd-el-Krim which might allow the latter to recover much of his dwindling prestige and enable him to renew the struggle in the spring of this year. How far this optimistic view of the situation taken by the French Government is justified, I am not in a position to judge, but I see that Mr. Clive's telegram No. 1 of the 2nd January bears out many of M. Briand's arguments.

12. As regards the particular question of Captain Gordon-Canning's visit to Paris, I think it may be stated that this has unquestionably proved a failure. Not only has M. Briand refused to receive Captain Canning, but no campaign such as Abd-el-Krim had apparently hoped for has been started in the press urging the necessity of an immediate peace. With the exception of the "Humanité" and one or two organs of the Left, the great majority of the newspapers have regarded Captain Canning with extreme suspicion, and have refused to consider his mission as having any other object than that of creating difficulties for the French Government.

I have, &c.
CREWE.

[W 2825/469/28] No. 2.

The Marquess of Crewe to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(*Received April* 6.)

(No. 612.)

Sir, *Paris, April* 5, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the situation in Morocco formed the subject of a discussion in the Chamber of Deputies on the 29th March during the debate which arose out of a grant to the Government of certain supplementary credits for the month of April. The sum required to meet the expenses which were expected to be incurred in connection with military operations in Morocco amounted to 49,192,905 fr., in comparison with amounts of 87 millions, 79 millions and 49 millions, which had been voted for a similar purpose in the months of January, February and March respectively.

2. The article dealing with the credit required for Morocco also contained that relating to the expenses which were expected to be incurred in Syria, and, as reported in my despatch No. 607 of the 1st April, a Socialist amendment to reduce the Syrian portion of this credit by 1 million francs was carried against the Government by a narrow majority. A further amendment moved by the Communist party to reduce by 1 million francs the whole credit, without making any distinction between the two separate portions thereof, was defeated by 382 votes to 144. In this division the minority was composed of the Communists and Socialists, while the Government, in addition to their usual supporters, obtained the assistance of the Right, who declared that their vote was governed by patriotic and not by party motives.

3. The Communist speakers put forward no new arguments in support of their amendment, and were content once more to urge that the Government should take immediate steps to enter into negotiations with Abd-el-Krim, and that they should

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forthwith definitely publish the terms of peace which they were understood to have drawn up in collaboration with the Spanish Government. The only speech of interest in the debate was that made by M. Briand, who gave a short *exposé* of the views held by the Government. As on many previous occasions, he explained once more that France had been the victim of an aggression in Morocco, and that she would be failing in her duty were she not to resist this aggression and to take such steps as would render a similar occurrence impossible in the future. It was not the fault of the French Government nor of the Spanish Government, with whom the former was co-operating, that peace had not yet been made. Abd-el-Krim had been made aware of the peace conditions drawn up by the two Governments as long ago as last July, but, instead of entering into negotiations on these bases, the Riffian leader had endeavoured to play off the French against the Spaniards and so to gain time in order to carry on his military operations. Neither of the two Governments concerned had, however, fallen into this trap, and they had refused to enter into separate negotiations with Abd-el-Krim. Quite recently Abd-el-Krim had tried a further strategem, and had endeavoured to create further difficulties for the French by proposing that an armistice to cover a certain portion of the front should be agreed upon. Such proposals, had, however, not been welcomed by the French, who had realised that Abd-el-Krim was merely endeavouring to secure a respite from attack in one place in order that he might renew his offensive in another quarter. To have granted such an armistice would have been only to allow war to continue, and would have in no way conduced to the establishment of a definite peace.

4. The French had, however, not been content to adopt a merely negative attitude, and had repeatedly made it clear to the Riffian emissaries that France had no desire to acquire fresh territory in the Riff; that her only aim was to arrive at a peaceful solution which had a reasonable chance of permanence; and that if Abd-el-Krim would only consent to enter into proper negotiations with the French and Spaniards, his overtures in this sense would meet with a ready response. It rested with Abd-el-Krim himself, who must surely be fully aware of the fact, to take the necessary steps in this direction.

5. The Government has taken advantage of the presence in Paris of M. Steeg to discuss with him the general state of affairs in Morocco. According to a communiqué which appeared in the "Temps" of the 31st March, a meeting was held on the 30th March between M. Briand, M. Painlevé, M. Steeg, Marshal Pétain and General Georges, during which the military situation and the possibility of the opening of negotiations with Abd-el-Krim was discussed. This communiqué ended by stating: "The latest conditions of peace drawn up by the French and Spanish Governments in full agreement, having been recently brought to the knowledge of Abd-el-Krim, it rests with the latter to bring hostilities to a close." From this statement it would appear that the French and Spanish Governments have recently taken steps, no doubt by some unofficial means, as on previous occasions, to inform Abd-el-Krim of the terms upon which they are prepared to negotiate. I am unaware whether these latest terms differ greatly from those previously drawn up and published on various occasions in France. In the debate referred to above, M. Briand, on being asked whether the Franco-Spanish terms had been altered, replied: "Oui; elles ont changé en ceci; que nous voulons qu'elles soient accompagnées de garanties telles que dans trois mois nous n'ayons pas à recommencer." M. Painlevé also declared: "Nous voulons des garanties, car nous voulons que les conditions de paix soient respectées." No further explanations on this point were forthcoming from the Government. From these remarks it may perhaps be inferred that the terms to be offered to Abd-el-Krim have been somewhat stiffened.

6. This desire of the French Government, as expressed in the above remarks of M. Briand and M. Painlevé, to ensure that sufficient guarantees are obtained to make certain that any peace which may be made with Abd-el-Krim be sufficiently lasting, is reiterated in an article in the "Petit Parisien" of the 31st March. This article professes to regard the Moroccan situation with considerable optimism, and declares that if Abd-el-Krim renews his offensive he will find a much less favourable state of affairs than he did a year ago. The writer maintains that the recent political action of the French with a view to regaining the allegiance of many of the dissident tribes has been highly successful, and he goes so far as to hint that Abd-el-Krim is now prepared to accept the suzerainty of the Sultan and would be content with a very limited measure of autonomy for the Riff.

I have, &c.
CREWE.

[W 2870/469/28] No. 3.

The Marquess of Crewe to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(*Received April* 7.)

(No. 617.)

Sir, *Paris, April* 6, 1926.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 612 of the 5th instant, I have the honour to inform you that two further conferences on the Moroccan situation were held at the Quai d'Orsay on the 2nd and 4th instant. MM. Briand, Painlevé, Steeg and Marshal Pétain were present at both of these meetings, while the second was in addition attended by M. Ponsot, the head of the African Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and General Simon, who has just returned from the scene of operations in Morocco.

2. The main question which would seem to have been discussed on these two occasions was that of entering into negotiations with Abd-el-Krim with a view to reaching a peaceful settlement of the situation in Morocco. Various communications would appear to have been recently exchanged between Abd-el-Krim and the Residency-General at Rabat through the intermediary of certain kaids in the Ouergha district, while it is now rumoured, according to the "Petit Parisien" of the 5th April, that Abd-el-Krim has suggested that he should send an official delegation to Tangier to get into touch with representatives of the French and Spanish Governments and to discuss with them the terms of peace.

3. The various newspapers which discuss this question all profess considerable scepticism as to the genuineness of Abd-el-Krim's desire for peace, and they maintain that any request for an armistice put forward by the Riffians must be accompanied by some form of guarantee that Abd-el-Krim definitely intends to accept Franco-Spanish terms.

4. There seems, however, to be a general feeling that the prospects of peace in the comparatively near future are now more favourable than on any previous occasions, and that it may not be long before definite negotiations are engaged upon. A communiqué in the "Temps" of the 5th April, which has every appearance of being officially inspired, states that—

> "L'éventualité de l'ouverture de négociations officielles se précise dans de bonnes conditions. Les conversations qui ont lieu actuellement entre les émissaires effectivement mandatés par Abd-el-Krim et les représentants des Gouvernements espagnol et français sont considérées comme très sérieuses et l'on en attend des résultats favorables."

5. This optimistic view of the situation is confirmed by an article in the "Petit Parisien" of the same date which concludes with the following paragraph:—

> "D'une façon générale, on peut affirmer que les probabilités d'un arrangement pacifique sont maintenant beaucoup plus sérieuses qu'il y a quelques semaines, mais rien n'autorise, pour l'instant, à croire que les véritables négociations vont prochainement commencer et moins encore à augurer qu'elles donneront un résultat favorable."

I have, &c.
CREWE.

[W 2971/5/28] No. 4.

The Marquess of Crewe to Sir Austen Chamberlain. -(*Received April* 10.)

(No. 647.)

Sir, *Paris, April* 9, 1926

WITH reference to my despatch No. 617 of the 6th instant, I have the honour to inform you that the question of Morocco continues to attract much attention here. A further conference between MM. Briand, Painlevé and Steeg was held on the 6th April at Cocherel, M. Briand's residence in the country, while the Spanish Ambassador is stated to have been a very frequent visitor at the Quai d'Orsay lately.

2. The "Petit Parisien" and the "Petit Journal" of the 8th April contain articles dealing with the situation which are so similar in substance that it may be inferred

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that they were both inspired by the same official source. Both these articles are at pains to point out that the French and Spanish Governments are acting in complete agreement, and that any steps which may be taken in connection with Abd-el-Krim's recent tentative efforts to open up negotiations will be executed jointly by both Powers. The report referred to in my despatch No. 617 that Abd-el-Krim had recently employed a certain kaid to act as his intermediary and to announce his willingness to appoint a delegation to enter into peace negotiations is confirmed, and it seems that this offer of Abd-el-Krim has been taken into serious consideration by the French and Spanish Governments and has not, like so many of his previous *démarches*, been summarily dismissed. To judge from the press, the French and Spanish Governments are now engaged in discussing not the terms of peace to be offered to Abd-el-Krim, for these, according to the "Petit Journal," have been long since determined and have suffered no change in principle, but rather the various military measures which will have to be taken by the two Governments together to ensure that, if negotiations are begun and an armistice made, adequate guarantees are previously secured to guard against any surprise attack from the Riffians.

3. It is interesting to note that both the "Petit Parisien" and the "Petit Journal" hint that the French and Spanish Governments do not intend to regard Abd-el-Krim as the suzerain of all the tribes against whom they are now fighting, and that they will insist on representatives of each of these tribes being present at any negotiations which may take place, Abd-el-Krim being merely treated as the chief of the Beni Ouriagel tribe. It is stated in one newspaper that Rabat is likely to be chosen as the place at which negotiations might be held and not Tangier, as suggested by Abd-el-Krim.

4. The general impression would seem to be that the French Government, at all events, would prefer not to reopen hostilities on a large scale, since such an event would cause them considerable embarrassment in Parliament. They have, therefore, welcomed this last overture made by Abd-el-Krim, and appear to be ready to enter into negotiations for a peaceful solution of the problem, provided always that they can be sure of obtaining sufficient guarantees to guard against a renewal of the Riffian attacks in the future.

I have, &c.
CREWE.

[W 3026/5/28] No. 5.

Sir H. Rumbold to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received April 12.)

(No. 144. Confidential.)

Madrid, April 7, 1926.

Sir,

FOR several days past the Spanish press has contained semi-official communications hinting at the prospect of some sort of peace negotiations between Abd-el-Krim and the French and Spanish Governments. In every case these communications emphasised the fact that France and Spain were working together in close accord in this matter. Whilst making due allowance for an innate suspicion of France in the mind of the average Spaniard, an uneasy feeling is apparent here that, owing to their financial and political difficulties, the French Government may be tempted to make a hasty and premature arrangement with Abd-el-Krim. Such an arrangement would leave the Spaniards in a very unfavourable position, and it was no doubt this consideration which led the Spanish Government to lay stress on the continued agreement of views between France and Spain.

2. The press of to-day contains the following statement: "After the Council of Ministers held last night the President, amongst the statements which he made to the journalists, and which are reproduced in their proper place, spoke in the following terms: 'I gave an account of African affairs, of Abd-el-Krim's proposal for peace negotiations, which the French and Spanish Governments are examining in complete agreement.'"

3. As I was seeing the Minister for Foreign Affairs this morning, I asked his Excellency whether I might without indiscretion enquire what was the present position of affairs with regard to the rumoured proposal of Abd-el-Krim for peace negotiations. Señor Yanguas at once replied that, in view of the fact that Great Britain was a party to the Tangier statute, it was his duty to tell me in confidence what had so far happened between Abd-el-Krim and the Spanish Government.

4. Abd-el-Krim's position had been greatly weakened. He was now hemmed in with his own tribe—the Beni Uriagual. He had made proposals for peace negotiations in a more serious manner than hitherto. But the Spanish Government had replied that, before they could contemplate such negotiations, Abd-el-Krim must accept four conditions. Firstly, he must recognise the sovereignty of the Sultan; secondly, he must leave Morocco (the phrase used by Señor Yanguas in French was "son éloignement"); thirdly, he must agree to a reciprocal exchange of prisoners; and, finally, he must surrender his arms.

5. Abd-el-Krim had replied that he accepted these four conditions as a basis for negotiations. This reply could not be considered as satisfactory by the Spanish Government. Abd-el-Krim had further proposed the appointment of plenipotentiaries and an armistice of indefinite duration. The Spanish Government would not agree to either of these proposals. If they agreed to appoint plenipotentiaries and accepted an armistice, they would be admitting that Abd-el-Krim was a belligerent in the proper sense of the term. They considered him a rebel, however, and so they had decided to appoint "negotiators" in the event of peace negotiations, and would be willing to grant Abd-el-Krim a "truce" up to, perhaps, the 1st May.

6. Señor Yanguas went on to explain that the Spanish Government were prepared to grant the fullest measure of autonomy to the tribes inhabiting the Riff, but they could not allow Abd-el-Krim to remain in the country, as his continued presence there would render the tribes uneasy and threaten the future tranquillity of the region in which he at present exercises influence. His Excellency said that great caution was necessary in dealing with persons like Abd-el-Krim. His proposal for an armistice of an indefinite duration was obviously designed to give his tribes sufficient time to get in their harvest. Once the harvest was got in, that fact, combined with his suggested peace negotiations on equal terms, would restore his waning prestige.

7. I asked Señor Yanguas whether he could tell me if the French Government shared the Spanish point of view as defined above. His Excellency replied that he was sure that the French Government would see the necessity of obtaining material guarantees from Abd-el-Krim before embarking on peace negotiations.

I have, &c.
HORACE RUMBOLD.

[W 3073/5/28] No. 6.

The Marquess of Crewe to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received April 14.)

(No. 661.)

Paris, April 12, 1926.

Sir,

IN my despatch No. 649 of the 9th April, I had the honour to transmit to you the text of a communiqué issued that day by the French Government, stating that peace negotiations were to be started very shortly at Oudjda between delegates of France and Spain and representatives of the Riffians, while in my telegram No. 152 I reported that M. Berthelot had informed Mr. Phipps that the French and Spanish Governments would insist upon the following four conditions being accepted by the Riffians:—

(1.) The sovereignty of the Sultan must be recognised by all the tribes now in revolt against the French and Spaniards.
(2.) Abd-el-Krim himself must leave Morocco.
(3.) The tribes must agree to surrender their arms.
(4.) All prisoners must be returned.

2. This statement of M. Berthelot is, I notice, confirmed by Madrid telegrams Nos. 31 and 32, and an article in the "Matin" of the 12th April,* which has every appearance of being officially inspired, enumerates the same four conditions, and states that the French and Spanish Governments will insist upon their acceptance. This article in the "Matin," of which a copy is enclosed herein,* not only describes the minimum requirements of the French and Spaniards in this connection, but also

* Not printed.

explains the concessions which the two Powers are prepared to grant to the insurgents. In the first place, the Riff will be granted administrative autonomy, subject always to the sovereignty of the Sultan being recognised, and to no direct relations being maintained with foreign countries. The task of delimiting the frontiers of the area within the Spanish zone, which is to be included in this autonomous régime, will be left to the French and Spanish delegations. So far as France herself is concerned, she will be content for the present frontier of the French zone to remain unchanged. If any minor alterations have to be made in this frontier, they must be effected by means of direct negotiations between the French and Spanish Governments, in which no third party may intervene. In addition to the grant of autonomy, France and Spain will be prepared to make appreciable economic concessions to the tribes.

3. While insisting upon the Riffians surrendering the arms and ammunitions which they now possess, the two Governments are apparently prepared to allow the Riff to maintain some sort of armed force (" une milice "). The import of arms for this force will, however, be carefully controlled.

4. The article in the " Matin " makes it clear that the French and Spanish Governments intend to insist upon obtaining sufficient guarantees to insure the stability of any peace which may be arrived at, and the fact is emphasised that the arrangements which are already in course of completion for the carrying out of offensive operations early in May will not be interrupted. Thus, in the event of the negotiations at Oudjda being broken off, the French and Spanish forces will be in a position at once to resume military action.

5. The news that negotiations were about to be entered into was, as was to be expected, received with mixed feelings in the press. The organs of the *Cartel des Gauches* and the " Humanité," the Communist newspaper, naturally welcomed the announcement and expressed the hope that peace would very shortly be made. On the other hand, the Opposition journalists, headed by Pertinax, professed to consider that the Government had been actuated in this matter by reasons of internal politics, and that their action had been dictated mainly by a desire to placate the feelings of the Socialists. According to this section of opinion, the only satisfactory method of ending the war and of ensuring that fresh troubles do not arise in the future is to carry on military operations until such time as Abd-el-Krim has been thoroughly subjugated and brought to heel. To enter into negotiations while he is still unconquered is more likely to revive his waning prestige and increase his potential danger.

6. It is interesting to note that neither the " Temps " nor the " Débats " show any enthusiasm over the Government's latest move, and that both consider it premature and that better results are likely to have been obtained were active military operations to be continued for some time longer against the Riffians. Both newspapers maintain that intimate collaboration between France and Spain is essential, not only for the immediate question of making peace with Abd-el-Krim, but also for the future stability of Morocco in general. They fear that, although this mutual co-operation may, for the moment, be all that is to be desired, it will cease to be effective when once the Riffian menace is temporarily removed, and that no adequate steps will be taken in the future on the part of the two Governments in common to guard against fresh outbreaks in the Riff.

7. Several newspapers point out that it is essential that the negotiations should not develop in such a way as to reopen the treaty basis of the whole Moroccan question, which could not fail to have unpleasant reactions on international relations. In this connection it is interesting to notice that newspapers of so different a complexion as the " Humanité " and the " Avenir " both hint that Spain is demanding concessions in the Tangier zone as the price of her co-operation.

8. M. Lopez Olivan, one of the Spanish delegates, has been in Paris during the last two days, and has been in consultation with his French colleagues. It is reported that he, together with M. Ponsot and General Simon, will leave for Oudjda on the 13th April.

I have, &c.
CREWE.

[W 3137/5/28] No. 7.

Consul Allchin to Mr. Clive (Tangier).—(Received in Foreign Office, April 15.)

(No. 48.)
Sir, *Tetuan, April 1, 1926.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith a memorandum on the military operations and the tribal situation in this zone during the period from the 1st January to the 31st March.

2. As I understand that the military attaché at His Majesty's Embassy in Madrid has recently made an extensive tour of this zone, the memorandum will be of little value. It contains, however, such information as I have gathered from the press and other sources. Some of the subjects dealt with, such as the Beni Hozmar operations, have already been fully treated in despatches, but they have been recapitulated for the purpose of easier reference.

3. Nothing of prime military importance occurred during the period under review. It opened in the usual winter calm and closed in the peace of Ramadan. The successful issue of the Beni Hozmar operation on the 7th March, the establishment of a new Spanish line at a greater distance from Tetuan and the consequent freeing of the capital from rebel shell-fire was the outstanding event, but rather on account of its moral effect and from the point of view of Spanish prestige than for any military reason. The demonstration of force and the march to Sok-el-Khemis in the Anjera district on the 18th February, when not a shot was fired, was notable as showing that this tribe is now more genuinely pacified than it has hitherto been. The Wad Ras and Hauz districts remained pacific, although, of course, only armed bodies could move about in them. The Spanish garrisons guarding the boundaries of these three tribes were reduced in numbers. Most of the small Beni Madan tribe made submission in January, and the rest of them in March. In the Laraiche district aggression by rebel concentrations against villages of the Ahl Serif and Beni Gorfet, which had recently submitted, was punished by two organised Spanish raids on the 6th and 11th March. The front at Ajdir was consolidated and a gap in it closed on the 12th March. Frequent minor raids took place on the Melilla front, but there was no engagement worthy of notice.

4. On the whole, it was a period of calm, relieved by an occasional minor Spanish success. Both sides had their eyes turned to the future and the forthcoming campaign. Plans were made for Franco-Spanish co-operation, General Sanjurjo visited the French zone and General Boichut is shortly expected in Tetuan. So far as the Spanish zone was concerned, it was expected that the coming operations would be mainly conducted on the Melilla and Alhucemas front. Abd-el-Krim made active propaganda among the tribes, and, in particular, sought to cement the Jebala more strongly to him. There was no prospect of any peace negotiations being held, and indications pointed to Abd-el-Krim's endeavouring once more to forestall attack and launching an offensive on the French front, perhaps even before the Fast of Ramadan was over.

I have, &c.
G. C. ALLCHIN.

Enclosure in No. 7.

Memorandum on Military Operations in Spanish Zone of Morocco, January 1 to March 31, 1926.

Demonstration against the Anjera Tribe.

1. The tribe had been quiet for some time, but the Spanish Command could not forget its warlike character, nor its history, and it remained a thorn in their side. Its submission had from time to time been claimed, but the menace remained. Its 116 villages were said to number some 23,000 inhabitants, of whom 6,000 owned rifles. Although strips of country of the Wad Ras and Hauz tribes bordered the Tetuan–Tangier and Tetuan–Ceuta roads respectively, the Anjera continued to threaten both of these essential lines of communication. Considerable numbers of troops were needed to man the Spanish posts guarding these two roads, as well as those posts on the borders of the Tangier zone. The tribe had been quiet, but it had

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not responded to the active political propaganda carried out by Spanish agents, and few rifles had been surrendered. At the same time it was felt that this propaganda must have done latent good, and, furthermore, that the effects of the blockade must have disposed many of the tribe to make effective submission. It was in these circumstances that it was decided to make an advance into the Anjera country.

2. On the 18th February a mixed force of some 10,000 men left Tetuan and advanced, by way of Laucien, to Sok-el-Khemis of the Anjera. Another force, under General Federico Berenguer, reached this market from the Ceuta road. In the event the advance was a mere demonstration. The tribesmen offered no resistance, and not a shot was fired.

3. The result of this demonstration seems to be that the subjugation of the Anjera tribe has been more nearly effected than ever before. The Spanish Command claims that the submission is complete, and that, although their own troops have not scoured the whole country, the friendly Kaid Ben Ali has visited every village and obtained professions of goodwill towards Spain. Representatives of the Barkokian fraction of the tribe came to Tetuan to make act of submission. About 700 rifles were surrendered.

4. So long as so many rifles still remain in the Anjera country its pacification cannot be considered as likely to endure indefinitely. Experience of the pressure of blockade will, however, probably prevent the tribe from entering into new hostilities with Spanish arms unless tribal successes in other districts present a favourable opportunity for doing so.

5. The Wad Ras and the Hauz had already submitted to the Makhzen, although a part of the former tribe had crossed into the Beni Ider country, where it remained in dissidence.

6. The position in these districts cannot yet be considered as stable, but the Spanish Command has shown its present confidence by reducing the number of its defensive posts, as well as the remaining garrisons, and has thus released men for service in other sectors.

Operations against Beni Hozmar Massif.

7. The Spanish withdrawal of 1924 was so designed as to leave a "strict minimum" of territory in Spanish hands and the barest margin of safety for Tetuan and its essential lines of communication. The Beni Hozmar massif, which overlooks Tetuan from the south, was given up. From the slopes of Gorgues, one of the mountains of the massif, the tribesmen could fire rifle bullets into the town. In 1925, therefore, General Primo de Rivera had himself directed a successful operation resulting in the taking of this mountain. In September of last year, however, the Spanish landing at Cebadilla led Abd-el-Krim to make a counter-stroke at Tetuan. By reason of the gallant defence of Kudia Tahar this attack failed. The rebels, however, emplaced a French 75-mm. gun in a cave on Jebel-bou-Zaitun, the easternmost mountain of the massif, some 800 metres in height and about 10,000 yards from Tetuan. With this gun and, it was later thought, with others Tetuan was intermittently shelled from September onwards. In spite of the harmful moral effect of this shelling, and of the damage it did to Spanish prestige, the Marquis de Estella had been of the opinion that its military significance was so small that it would not justify the losses that an operation against such a difficult position would entail. The High Commissioner, General Sanjurjo, did not share this opinion, and, in February, while he was in Spain, he urged his point of view on the Prime Minister. His cause was furthered by the fact that the shelling at this time grew more intense, and that among its victims was the wife of an official of the Spanish Tribunal in Tetuan. Permission was accordingly given for the operation to be undertaken.

8. A force of about 12,000 men was concentrated in Tetuan. It was divided into two columns of approximately 5,000 men, one of which was to operate, under Colonel Millan Astray, from Ben Karrish, and the other, under Colonel Orgaz, from Gorgues. A force of 2,000 men was placed in the Kitsan Valley. General Sanjurjo himself directed the operation. Warships were ready to make a demonstration off the mouth of the Wad Emsa.

9. On the 1st March the troops took up their positions and attacked on the following day. At first they made no measurable advance, and by the evening of the 4th March it was clear that they had suffered a check. On the 5th, however, the rebel resistance weakened. On the 6th the pass of Dar Raid was occupied, and on the 7th March Jebel-bou-Zaitun was scaled.

10. The rebels seem to have realised on the 4th March that they could not withstand for long such a powerful attack, for they withdrew their guns on the night of the 4th/5th. Nevertheless, the Spanish arms had achieved a spectacular success, and had occupied a line at such a distance from Tetuan that the humiliating shelling of the town could not be repeated. The moral effect of the victory locally was great.

11. This success was estimated to have cost the Spanish troops little less than 500 casualties, but it was hoped that, besides its immediate result, it would have a far-reaching effect on the tribal situation.

12. This effect has been slow to show itself. Those members of the small Beni Madan tribe who had not submitted in January, and who had not joined the Bani Said, came to Tetuan; the village of Jarguit, which was within the new Spanish line, submitted to the Makhzen; the villages of Mokadassem and Helila also made a dubious submission. On the whole, however, the tribal effect of the success seems to have been small. The Beni Hozmar, whose surrender was expected in many quarters, have held back. To indicate that their spirit was by no means broken, the tribesmen passed through the Spanish lines and brought a trench-mortar up to the walls of Tetuan on the night of the 14th March, and fired six bombs into the town. The new Spanish line is declared to be consolidated. It is nevertheless constantly harassed by the enemy.

Laraiche Sector.

13. Spanish propaganda among the dissident tribes obtained some measure of success, and several villages of the Beni Gorfet and Ahl Serif tribes had made submission to the Makhzen. In February Abd-el-Krim sent harkas to this district and representatives, among them Raisuli's son, to strengthen his authority. A rebel concentration of tribesmen from Beni Skar, Beni Isset, Ahl Serif and Sumata was formed, and many of the villages that had fallen away from Abd-el-Krim were chastised.

14. In view of this activity on the part of the rebels, the Spanish Command decided to carry out a small punitive expedition on the 6th March in the district of the Beni Merqi, the northernmost fraction of the Ahl Serif tribe, adjoining the Beni Gorfet.

15. General Riquelme placed a force of some 6,500 men in the field, and himself directed the operation from bou-Ala. The force was divided into three columns, a vanguard composed entirely of native troops under Colonel Asensio and two flanking columns commanded by Colonels Boloix and Castello.

16. After an hour's artillery preparation, the advance began at 7 A.M. Colonel Boloix's column advanced towards Tabaganda and the others towards Rapta and Auaca, while the native troops entered the villages of Maimoun and Sex and put them to flames. The village beni Merqi of the Sumata was shelled and bombed by aeroplanes, a French air squadron assisting.

17. The resistance of the tribesmen was at first determined, but they later took to flight. Casualties on the Spanish side were confined almost entirely to the native troops.

18. On the 9th March the High Commissioner visited this sector to examine the local situation with General Riquelme. It was then decided that a second operation was called for.

19. This second operation took place on a front of about 10 kilom. on the 11th March. It was directed against enemy concentrations in the Beni Sfar Valley, approximately 15 kilom. due east of Alcazar, on the southern limits of the Ahl Serif country.

20. The general plan of the operation was the same as on the 6th March, and the same troops were engaged. A French force, however, covered the right flank of the advance. General Riquelme directed the operation from Borja.

21. After an artillery preparation, Colonel Asensio's native troops left Megadi and Yayuca and advanced by way of Dar-el-Latar towards the Beni Sfar Valley. The enemy concentration there was heavily bombed by a combined French and Spanish air force. The Spanish native troops then entered the valley and carried out a "razzia," burning the villages and seizing cattle and grain. This effected, the troops returned to Laraiche.

Melilla.

22. The daily communiqués never failed to mention some activity on the Melilla front. This was, however, always of a minor order and of negligible importance.

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It consisted usually of cattle-stealing raids carried out with varying success by both sides.

23. On the 13th March the rebels were seen to be working on fortifications in the Tizzi-Assa sector, and general activity was observed in this neighbourhood. On the 19th March the tribes made a light attack on the Spanish line, but this was repulsed with few losses.

24. No serious operation was carried out. Both sides, however, were engaged in preparing for the forthcoming campaign.

Ajdir.

25. Spanish reports announced that some progress was being made with the consolidation of this front, the line being put into a satisfactory state of defence. There was, however, a gap between the part of the line near the Qasbah of Buyahegedin and the sea. Encouraged by their success at Tetuan, the Spanish Command decided to carry out a small operation on the 10th March to close this gap. The operation was reported to have been successfully completed on the 12th March.

26. On the 19th March, when General Martin, commanding the Ajdir sector, visited Melilla, he informed General Castro Girona that the consolidation of the whole line had been effected with little interference from the enemy and that all was quiet.

Franco-Spanish Co-operation.—Preparations for the coming Campaign.

27. The principle of co-operation laid down at the Conference of Madrid, and at the meetings at Algeciras and Sok-el-Sibt, in 1925 remained in force, although it had never been very effective. A flank-guard of French troops and a squadron of French aeroplanes from Wazzan, however, assisted General Riquelme in the operations in the Laraiche sector in the first half of March, and messages of goodwill were later exchanged between the two commands.

28. On the 16th March General Sanjurjo visited M. Steeg in Rabat. The Spanish High Commissioner later saw General Boichut in Wazzan, and, after a visit to Fez, returned to Tetuan on the 21st March.

29. The nature and detail of the discussions that took place have not been disclosed. It is, however, understood that, although M. Steeg entertained some hope of obtaining an early peace by negotiation, plans were discussed for energetic concerted action against Abd-el-Krim, with a view to forcing a peace on him by the end of the year. So far as Spain is concerned, policy at present rests on Primo de Rivera's recent pronouncement, "a dictar la paz, no a pactar." Operations are expected to take place on all fronts, but the main intention is said to be to make effective the Franco-Spanish junction between Melilla and Alhucemas and the French zone.

30. General Castro Girona, commanding at Melilla, arrived in Tetuan to interview General Sanjurjo on the 23rd March, returning two days later to Melilla, where he was joined by the High Commissioner on the 28th March. After an examination of the situation there, General Sanjurjo is to go to Madrid to confer with the Prime Minister.

31. General Boichut is expected to visit Tetuan in the course of April.

32. Some 2,000 recruits have recently arrived in Morocco from Spain to bring existing units up to strength. A few more aeroplanes have also been acquired.

Abd-el-Krim's Preparations.

33. Abd-el-Krim, on his side, is also making his preparations for the coming campaign.

34. One of his preoccupations has been the attitude of the Jebala tribes. He had seen signs of restlessness among them, had been displeased at the progress of Spanish propaganda among the Beni Gorfet and Ahl Serif, and later by the successful Spanish raids in that sector, and had not been satisfied with the resistance offered in the Beni Hozmar massif. Rumours current at the time of this last operation, although exaggerated, were doubtless correct in suggesting that friction existed between the Riff Command and the Jebala in the field.

35. Abd-el-Krim accordingly took steps to assure himself of energetic Jebala support during the forthcoming campaign. He sent representatives among the tribes to instil an offensive spirit into them. He chastised parts of the Beni Gorfet and Ahl Serif, although this only led to a Spanish counter-stroke. He cast into prison at Tazarut and Sheshauan kaids and others whose resistance in these districts and in

the Beni Hozmar massif had been weak. He had already released Khaled, Raisuli's son, from captivity, and sent him back to his Jebala home on the condition that he should exhort the tribes to fight. At Targuist, on the 19th March, Abd-el-Krim is said to have married a daughter of Raisuli as a further measure to cement the Jebala to him.

36. The absence of any historical basis for the present association between the Jebala and the Riff tribes always gives rise to conjecture as to how long it will last. It is unlikely that it will outlive the effective of Abd-el-Krim, but there is no reason to suppose that the break-up of either is at hand.

37. Energetic propaganda is being made among all the tribes, and not only among those in the Jebal district. Letters from Abd-el-Krim are being read in the markets. It is reported that he has called to active service 30 per cent. of the Beni Tuzin, Tenseman and Beni Ulishshek tribes, offering them 100 pesetas a month and a measure of barley as pay. During the last days of March, although Ramadan had only half run its course, it was said that it was Abd-el-Krim's intention to make an early attack on the French front.

38. Reports of food shortage in the Riff have been exaggerated, and the recent heavy rains assure Abd-el-Krim of a satisfactory harvest. In spite of the growing menace from outside, he can thus go into action with a comparative light heart.

Tetuan. April 1, 1926.

[**W 3333/5/28**] No. 8.

The Marquess of Crewe to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(*Received April* 22.)

(No. 732.)

Sir, *Paris, April* 20, 1926.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 661 of the 12th April, I have the honour to inform you that the "Echo de Paris" of the 20th April contains a long Havas communiqué from Oudjda giving an account of conversations which have recently taken place there between the French and Spanish Governments and the Riffian emissaries. This communiqué, of which a copy* is enclosed herein, was, I understand, written by M. Bassée, the diplomatic correspondent of the Havas Agency, and gives a clear account of recent events, in contra-distinction to the somewhat confusing and conflicting reports which have appeared in the Paris newspapers during the last few days.

2. You will observe that the communiqué states that, at the opening meeting at Camp Berteaux, General Simon informed the Riffian delegates that, before negotiations proper could be begun, the French and Spanish Governments would require the fulfilment by the Riffians of three preliminary conditions. These conditions were—

(1.) Suspension of all fighting.
(2.) The exchange of prisoners.
(3.) The advance of the French and Spanish troops to the depth of some seven kilom. in order to occupy certain points which would afford them sufficient military guarantees against the renewal of hostilities of Abd-el-Krim.

Once the Riff had complied with these three preliminary conditions the French and Spaniards would be ready to discuss the other terms of peace, that is to say, the recognition by the Riffians of the sovereignty of the Sultan; the banishment of Abd-el-Krim; the disarmament of the tribes; and the new régime to be granted to the Riff.

3. The chief Riffian delegate stated in reply that, while he and his companions were prepared to discuss the possibility of making peace on the basis of the political conditions put forward by the French and Spanish Governments, they were not ready to accept the preliminary military demands made upon them, and in particular they were unable to agree to the immediate advance of the French and Spanish troops. The French and Spanish delegates, however, maintained that they could not enter into negotiations without these preliminary conditions having been fulfilled, and in order to prevent a complete breakdown in the negotiations it was

* Not printed.

decided that one of the Riff delegates should return and endeavour to obtain Abd-el-Krim's agreement to these preliminary demands put forward by the French and Spaniards. The reply of Abd-el-Krim to these suggestions is expected to reach Oudjda on Thursday next.

4. The Havas communiqué expresses the opinion that, while Abd-el-Krim may be ready at once to exchange all prisoners, he is unlikely to consent to the advance of the French and Spanish forces, and that it is to be expected that the Riff delegates will do all in their power to create dissension between the French and Spanish representatives.

5. The news that a hitch had occurred at Oudjda at so early a stage of the conversations has been received by the Paris press, as was to be expected, with mixed feelings. The Communist organ openly accuses the French and Spanish Governments of having *saboté* the conference, whilst the " Œuvre " professes to regard the preliminary conditions imposed by General Simon as an ultimatum which it is unreasonable to expect the Riffians to accept. On the other hand, the Nationalist newspapers express the fear that Abd-el-Krim is playing for time, and they are anxious lest the conference should drag on indefinitely, thereby depriving the French and Spanish of the opportunity of renewing military operations during the fine season, and enabling Abd-el-Krim to renew the campaign when it best suits him. This view is also expressed by the " Temps," which once more reiterates its opinion that anything in the nature of a patched-up or temporary peace with Abd-el-Krim would be fatal, and that it would be far better to continue the war for a further period until the Riffians shall have been finally crushed. Disappointment is also expressed at the fact that the Riffian delegation appears to represent Abd-el-Krim himself alone, and not the general body of dissident tribes, as had been expected would be the case.

6. It is interesting to note that there appears to be a growing feeling, at all events among the Right, against M. Steeg, who is regarded as being mainly responsible for the recent developments, and who is looked on as being entirely actuated by party motives. The fear is expressed that M. Briand may give way, for reasons of domestic politics, to M. Steeg's persuasion and allow very considerable concessions to be offered to Abd-el-Krim. Considerable disapproval is also felt in these circles regarding M. Steeg's immediate entourage. In estimating the importance of these attacks upon the Resident-General, it must, however, be remembered that the Right have never forgiven M. Steeg for having declined to come to the rescue of M. Millerand in 1924.

7. As a counterpoise to the attitude of the Right, certain newspapers of the Left, who are naturally desirous that peace should be made as soon as possible, are complaining of the intransigence of the Spanish Government, which is held responsible for the demand that Abd-el-Krim should be banished from Morocco—a demand which, in the eyes of the Left, is unreasonable and unjust.

I have, &c.
CREWE.

[**W 3403/76/28**] No. 9.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Sir H. Rumbold (Madrid).

(No. 194.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 23, 1926.

THE Spanish Ambassador repeated to me to-day the thanks of his Government for the rescue by British airmen of the occupants of the Spanish aeroplane which fell in the desert.

He then informed me that he had been instructed by General Primo de Rivera to make to me a personal and confidential communication about the current negotiations with Abd-el-Krim. These negotiations, he said, did not proceed from a Spanish initiative, though he was not certain whether the initiative was French or Riffian. In any case the French Government had informed the Spanish Government that, partly for reasons of internal policy, partly of general foreign policy, they were anxious for them to be held, and the Spanish Government had replied that they would not be an obstacle to the French wishes. They themselves, however, were not hopeful of a satisfactory result. The Riffis were now undoubtedly in a worse position, both from a military and economic view, than they had ever been before, and it was the view of the Spanish Government that, by a vigorous prosecution of

the newly developed policy of a constant harassing offensive, the Spanish and French troops could reduce them to complete submission with far smaller concessions than those which were to be offered. Further they thought that the Riffis were not sincere in the negotiation and were only playing for time. It was for this reason that they had stipulated that they would not negotiate beyond the 1st May. In the meantime they had simply given their troops the order to cease fire, but there had been nothing in the nature of an armistice with the Riffis, as suggested in some pro-Riffian newspapers, for the very reason indicated by those papers that such an armistice would be a recognition of their belligerency. The Ambassador then recited the principal heads of the proposed negotiation, which were the recognition of the authority of the Makhzen, the withdrawal of Abd-el-Krim from Morocco, the surrender of arms, and the release of all prisoners.

I thanked the Ambassador for the communication. I told him that we took no pleasure in the troubles of our friends, and could only wish that the Spanish and French Governments might overcome their difficulties and secure a satisfactory pacification of the country. This would be our attitude towards any troubles sustained by two such friendly Governments in any part of the world. In this case we had the additional reason for desiring their success that the pacification of the Riff must react favourably on the position of Tangier. I then informed the Ambassador that I had instructed you to speak to the Prime Minister upon this subject. I indicated in very general terms the disquiet which I have expressed to you in those instructions, and I tried to impress upon the Ambassador that it was owing to the friendly consideration of Great Britain for Spanish interests at the time when we made our agreement with France about Morocco that Spain owed her position in Northern Africa, but that we were firmly attached to the international status of Tangier, most anxious that the statute should be made to work, and unable to contemplate any change which would alter in law or in practice its present condition. I added that I was certain that it could not be in the interests of Spain to raise such a question. It would only provoke demands from other quarters which would add to our embarrassments, already sufficiently great owing to the non-recognition of the statute by Italy. His Majesty's Government were most anxious to secure Italian adhesion to the statute, and were even prepared to make some sacrifice of their own rights if in that way this adhesion could be secured.

I am, &c.
AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

[**W 3512/5/28**] No. 10.

The Marquess of Crewe to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received April 26.)

(No. 766.)
Sir, *Paris, April* 26, 1926.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 732 of the 20th instant, I have the honour to inform you that M. Briand made a pronouncement regarding the negotiations now in progress at Oudjda during the discussion of the budget of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in the Chamber of Deputies on the 23rd April.

2. The matter was raised by M. Renaudel, who, on behalf of the Socialist party, expressed the fear lest the Government should be influenced by the campaign which was being carried on in certain newspapers, not only in Paris, but also abroad, to the effect that the holding of the conference at Oudjda was premature and that active military operations should be resumed without delay. The Socialist party wished to be reassured and to be certain that the Government were genuinely endeavouring to reach a solution at Oudjda and that they did not intend to make use of the negotiations merely as a screen to shelter their preparations for the renewal of the offensive.

3. M. Renaudel was somewhat disturbed about the attitude adopted by the Spanish Government. He was sceptical regarding the sincerity of the Directory's profession of its pacific intentions, and he thought it questionable whether the French Government, in insisting on acting in co-operation with Spain, would not make it much more difficult to attain a satisfactory settlement. Finally, M. Renaudel laid emphasis on the anxiety felt by the Socialists lest the whole Moroccan question should become an object of international discussion. In particular he referred to the recent reports circulated in the press that Spain

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intended to insist on the revision of the Tangier statute. This, he pointed out, would almost inevitably entail the intervention of Italy.

4. M. Briand, who had already interrupted M. Renaudel to refute the latter's insinuation that France was not acting in perfectly good faith in entering into the negotiations at Oudjda, at once stated that there was no question of any modification of the Tangier statute taking place. Turning to the more general question, the President of the Council declared that the French and Spanish Governments had proved how sincerely anxious they were to make peace by the ready manner in which they had responded to the recent overtures of the Riffians and had agreed to the meeting of a conference at Oudjda. As he had often said before, the French Government had only one aim : " Préserver les territoires que les conventions internationales ont placés sous notre contrôle, les laisser sous la règle internationale qui a été tracée, qui reste la même, à laquelle aucune atteinte ne doit être portée, pas plus par Abd-el-Krim que par les nations contractantes."

5. It was, however, essential that the peace should be a lasting one and Abd-el-Krim should not be able to renew his attacks a few years hence. The events of the last year, which might have had such serious consequences, had proved that the risk of the recurrence of the Riffian invasion must at all costs be avoided. Subject to this all-important proviso, the French Government was, M. Briand stated, ready to go to great lengths to secure peace, more especially since it was fully realised that to continue the campaign would be to place a very heavy burden on the finances of the country, already in so precarious a state.

6. After remarking that it was a mistake to think that Abd-el-Krim was the sole representative of the tribes in revolt, some of whom would, in fact, be only too glad to be freed from the suzerainty of the self-styled " Emir," the President of the Council begged the Deputies, the press and public opinion in general not to indulge in polemics over the negotiations at Oudjda, but to show patience and discretion.

7. The debate was closed by M. Doriot, who once again felt called upon to explain the views of the Communist party. Having started by declaring that the demand that Abd-el-Krim should leave the country was unjust, that the proposed advance of 7 kilom. by the French and Spanish forces was unreasonable and that the French Government was merely serving the interests of certain Spanish companies who wished to obtain concessions in the Riff, M. Doriot proceeded to out-Herod Herod by demanding the complete independence of the Riff, whereas, as M. Briand pointed out, Abd-el-Krim had already intimated that he was willing to accept the sovereignty of the Sultan. The Communist spokesman then hinted that all was not well in Southern Morocco and that trouble was to be anticipated in that quarter, and declared that the only real solution of the problem was the military evacuation of the whole of Morocco.

I have, &c.
CREWE.

[W 5139/5/28] No. 11.

The Marquess of Crewe to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(*Received June* 8.)

(No. 1067.)
Sir, *Paris, June 7, 1926.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that one of my secretaries was informed to-day at a private luncheon party by a member of the Press Bureau of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that the forthcoming Franco-Spanish discussions respecting the situation in the Riff would begin in Paris on the 14th June.

2. The object of these discussions would be two-fold. In the first place, they would be concerned with the final military liquidation of the situation and the "submission" of the tribes who were still unsubdued. Secondly, the discussions would relate to the whole field of the future administration of the Riff. The situation of the tribes dwelling immediately on either side of the boundary of the French and Spanish zones would be given special study, and an effort would be made to create such a form of administration as would render impossible a repetition of Abd-el-Krim's adventure by some other leader. On the necessity of this the Spaniards were just as determined as the French, despite and, indeed, because of the fact that it was in their zone that Abd-el-Krim's activities had had their origin.

3. The member of the Ministry staff, whilst of opinion that M. Steeg's part in the recent peace negotiations, &c., had been deliberately painted in the worst light by his political opponents, admitted that there was no doubt, as is stated on every side, that M. Steeg was greatly influenced in Morocco by his political ambitions in Paris.

I have, &c.
CREWE.

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[W 5212/5/28] No. 12.

Acting Consul-General Bond to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(*Received June* 10.)

(No. 120.)
Sir, *Tangier, June 3, 1926.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 115 of the 31st May, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a copy of an article* which appeared in the " Presse marocaine " of the 1st June, from the pen of its editor, M. Jean Renaud.

2. I have thought it worth while to forward a copy of this article because it emphasises the difference of attitude of the Spanish-zone tribes towards France and Spain and the fact that the recent spectacular events must confer unequal benefits on the two countries. It is true that this aspect of the Spanish Moroccan problem has been brought to your notice before, but at the moment it seems to be of outstanding importance.

3. As you are aware, Abd-el-Krim surrendered specifically to the French, and has since prayed that he may never be handed over to the Spanish authorities, who, with the fate of many of their prisoners still in doubt, are clamouring for his head. Most of the recent tribal submissions have been made to France, and it is most probable that, although the Spanish offensive might have reached its objective, no submissions at all would have been made if France had not taken an active part in the campaign.

4. This is easily explained by the fact that the natives of the Spanish zone hate and despise the Spaniards, and probably will always do so. They also have every reason to dislike them as a " protecting " nation.

5. The attitude towards the French is different. The Spanish-zone Moor, like other Moslems, doubtless dislikes all Christians, but he is a judge of character, and, in any case, he dislikes less those who do not claim authority over him. Furthermore, France's record in the Great War has inspired and, despite Abd-el-Krim's successes last year, still inspires respect for her as a fighter. Early in 1925, when the Spanish army had been thrown back and could launch no further attack for some time, it is possible that the tribes went willingly to fight the French ; but the continuance of the war this year, when it was clear that it was compromising the situation with regard to Spain, was unpopular. From the point of view of the tribes, it was obviously advisable to make peace with France, or with France and Spain together if a separate peace were impossible. War with Spain could always be renewed later. The opening of peace negotiations at Oujda persuaded the tribes that Abd-el-Krim had grasped the situation and would act accordingly. His foolish failure to do so gravely affected their *moral* and was largely accountable for the break-up of tribal resistance.

6. In view of these considerations, it is clear that whereas France, for the present at least, is in a position to regard her Spanish zone difficulty as settled, Spain is by no means in so happy a case. Recognising this, Spain loses no opportunity of stating, with what truth it is difficult to judge, that the condition of the Spanish zone will ultimately prove to be of greater importance to France than to herself. When it was suggested at Oujda that Abd-el-Krim should be left as an independent Governor of the Riff, Spain talked of the effect that such a settlement would have in the French zone, and said that the Glaoui would not be content with less power. Now, Spain's rôle is to emphasise the danger constituted for the French zone by the presence of turbulent tribes across the border, and to assert that she is no longer a colonising Power herself, so that this condition would be of small importance to her. In this way Spain hopes to preserve French co-operation at a time when France herself has no clear call to act. Spain is under no delusions as to hatred in which she is held, and hopes, with France's aid, to take advantage of the present favourable opportunity to disarm all the tribes and to render this hatred ineffective. It is yet early to say what joint policy will be

* Not printed.

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decided upon by the two countries, but it is not probable that France will lend herself to Spain's ambitious schemes.

7. The continued intervention of France might cause all the tribes to yield in view of their present undoubted weakness. In due course, however, the struggle with Spain alone would be renewed. Without French intervention Spain cannot be expected to succeed in making further progress. If it leads to the secession of France, Abd-el-Krim's surrender will thus prove to have been most beneficial to the tribes. Already native reports have indicated that preparations are being made to continue the struggle with Spain alone. Spanish troops recently met with resistance from the Bocoya, whose country lies along the coast to the west of Alhucemas. Rumours state that the attitude of Khareivou, the Jebala chief, has not weakened, and that, with the Riff leaders Boudra and Bou Lehya, he is seeking to re-establish a unified command. It is said that Raisuli's son, Khaled, may be appointed to some leading position, so that the prestige of his name may be used.

8. It is generally recognised that recent events have been most favourable to France and that Spain cannot hope to reap equal benefits. In some quarters Spain is blamed for this and it is said that she would have been better advised to make peace before Abd-el-Krim's surrender, so that she might apply the "Grand Kaid" policy which France had adopted so successfully in the south. In view, however, of the bitter hatred of Spain, of the ill-concealed intention to renew the war against her, and of Abd-el-Krim's unwillingness to give full guarantees for a durable peace, I do not share this view, and I am furthermore of the opinion that, by her clear desire for war at a time when French opinion was pacific, Spain deserves much of the credit for such successes as have been obtained.

I have, &c.
W. L. BOND.

CHAPTER II.—FRENCH ZONE.

[W 467/467/28] No. 13.

Consul Selous to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 1.)
Sir, *Casablanca, January 7, 1926.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith an interesting memorandum which I have received from His Majesty's vice-consul at Marrakesh upon civil jurisdiction in the French zone of Morocco, with particular reference to the recent institution of a French court of first instance ("tribunal de première instance") in that city.

2. The creation, at long last, of a French tribunal at Marrakesh competent to hear all civil cases is, as Mr. Vice-Consul Were states, a matter for universal congratulation, and particularly so at Marrakesh, the business interests of which will benefit very greatly thereby.

3. Mr. Were's brief summary of the civil judicial organisms in this protectorate makes a very useful document, the last paragraph of which exposes the anomalous situation existing in respect of the Grand Kaids, who are in a position to keep creditors waiting indefinitely.

4. Paragraph 5 might with advantage be completed by the insertion at the very end of it of the following sentence, viz. :—

"Appeal from the Court of Appeal at Rabat lies to the Cour de Cassation at Paris."

I have, &c.
G. H. SELOUS.

Enclosure in No. 13.

Memorandum on Civil Jurisdiction in the French Zone of Morocco, with Special Reference to the impending Creation of a "Tribunal de première Instance" at Marrakesh.

THERE exist in French Morocco at the present time three separate and distinct organisations for the trial of civil actions. These are: the consular courts of the capitulatory Powers (Great Britain and the United States of America), the native Moorish courts, and the French tribunals created since the establishment of the protectorate.

2. The consular courts have jurisdiction in all cases where their nationals are defendants, whatever the plaintiff's nationality; in matters relating to real estate in Morocco, however, the Moorish religious court is competent.

3. The Moorish courts are of two kinds—the Moslem religious court ("Shra'a"), which decides all cases concerned with real estate, except where the property in dispute has been "immatriculated," that is, registered in due form in accordance with the regulations introduced by the French, or where both parties to the dispute are non-Moorish subjects. (Here, and wherever the expression recurs in this report, "non-Moorish subjects" means all foreigners other than British subjects and American citizens.) Secondly, the basha's court, which pronounces in the case of litigation between Moorish subjects and between a plaintiff of British or American nationality and a Moorish defendant.

4. The French courts are competent in those real property suits which are excepted from the jurisdiction of the Moslem religious court, and in all other civil cases provided that one of the parties is a non-Moorish subject.

5. The extent of the jurisdiction of the various courts is as follows:—

The consular courts are empowered to pronounce in all civil cases, whatever the amount involved, subject to appeal to a higher court. A limit is, however, placed upon the jurisdiction of uncommissioned consular officers.

Appeal from the decisions of the Moslem religious court lies in all cases to the "Shra'a" court of appeal at Rabat.

Appeal from the basha's court lies to the "Haut-Tribunal chérifien" at Rabat whenever the sum involved exceeds 1,000 fr.

Finally, the French courts are of three kinds :—

"Tribunaux de paix," from which there is no appeal when the subject-matter of the action does not exceed 1,000 fr. In all other cases within their competence, appeal lies to the "tribunal de première instance" of the district; such cases are—those where the sum involved lies between 1,000 and 3,000 fr.; those where the matter in dispute relates to the transport of goods or passengers by land or sea and the sum involved does not exceed 5,000 fr.; and those where the law to be applied is that of master and servant or of warranty, when no money value limit is placed upon their jurisdiction.

"Tribunaux de première instance," which hear appeals from decisions of the "tribunaux de paix" in their district, and pronounce finally in cases where the sum involved lies between 3,000 fr. and 5,000 fr. In all other cases appeal from their decisions lies to the Court of Appeal at Rabat.

The Court of Appeal is occupied solely with appeals from the decisions of the "tribunaux de première instance."

6. The foregoing does not purport to be anything but a bare exposé, in which there are many lacunæ, of the judicial system in force; but no useful object would be served, for the purposes of this report, by a more complete disquisition on a situation which in its broad outline is already sufficiently bewildering.

7. As regards the machinery for the trial of actions in the consular and Moorish courts, Marrakesh is neither better nor worse off than other towns in Morocco; but the commercial community has long had legitimate cause for dissatisfaction with the facilities provided for the prosecution of civil suits in the French courts.

8. The "tribunal de paix," which is the only French court in the Marrakesh district, is grouped with those at Mazagan, Saffi and Mogador, and two such courts at Casablanca itself, under the "tribunal de première instance" at Casablanca, which hears all cases outside their competence and all appeals from their decisions. The French courts, as has been seen, form the proper court of venue for all actions in which one of the parties is a non-Moorish subject. A preponderating proportion of the trade of Morocco, probably over 80 per cent., is in the hands of such non-Moorish subjects either as purchasers or vendors, and it may therefore be calculated that not less than 80 per cent of the commercial disputes brought to trial in Morocco are submitted to the French courts. Given the grouping of six "tribunaux de paix," three of them in towns lying at a considerable distance from Casablanca, under the "tribunal de première instance" at Casablanca, and given the absurdly limited competence of those "tribunaux de paix," the congestion of legal business at Casablanca can be better imagined than described.

9. It is probable that the commercial interests of all the towns mentioned—Casablanca, Marrakesh, Mazagan, Saffi and Mogador—are adversely affected by this state of affairs, but Marrakesh is undoubtedly the principal sufferer. Marrakesh is the natural and potential, if not the actual, trading centre of a district the population of which numbers, roughly, one third of that of the whole of Morocco, and that commerce is here as yet in so backward a state may without injustice be attributed in large part to the shortcomings of the judicial system. Such is the delay involved by litigation and such the expense attendant upon the prosecution at Casablanca of a suit of which the subject-matter may amount to no more than a paltry 3,000 and some odd francs that the Marrakesh trader as a rule deems it wise to accept any compromise, however disadvantageous, rather than to embark on legal proceedings, and is very wary of engaging capital or of granting credit in a district where his recourse against his debtor is so limited in extent. Trade is therefore restricted and the commercial development of the town cannot but be retarded.

10. The draft budget of the protectorate for the year 1926 contains, however, provision for the creation of a "tribunal de première instance" at Marrakesh, and effect is thus at last given to a promise made as long ago as 1921 by the authorities at Rabat in response to the repeated and legitimate complaints of commercial interests at Marrakesh. It is to be hoped, therefore, that, with the inauguration of the new tribunal and the disappearance of the formidable obstacle to free and confident trading constituted by the absence of adequate legal machinery, Marrakesh will begin to take its proper place in the commercial organisation of the protectorate. It is especially fortunate that the promise given four years ago is now on the point of fulfilment at a time when the impending completion (in about a twelvemonth) of the broad-gauge railway from Casablanca is inspiring hopes of a considerable accession of business to Marrakesh and of

the feasibility of selling the produce of the district "f.o.b. railway Marrakesh" and of purchasing its requirements "c.i.f. Marrakesh," thus cutting out the Casablanca middlemen.

11. One stumbling-block remains, however, in the peculiar position occupied by the Grand Kaids. From motives of policy it was laid down, in the earliest days of the protectorate, that suits in which these tribal chieftains were concerned as defendants were not to be brought before the courts without the sanction of the Resident-General. That sanction has never, I believe, been forthcoming in the case of the Grand Kaids and very rarely in the case of their associates and dependants. The impression exists in commercial circles here that the new order of things will have as a natural consequence the suppression of this immunity, which is of considerable value to the beneficiaries; but I gather from General Daugan that no such change is contemplated at present. No doubt in due course the Grand Kaids will be brought into line with the common herd, but for the moment the political situation is too precarious and uncertain to permit of the experiment.

C. A. W. WERE.

Marrakesh, December 22, 1925.

[**W 1039/469/28**] No. 14.

Consul-General Sir A. Ryan to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(*Received February* 10.)

(No. 13.)

Sir, *Rabat, January* 29, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copies of a despatch from His Majesty's vice-consul at Fez, No. 5, of the 19th January, and a general report by Colonel Mackereth, dated the 18th January, on the general situation in this zone during 1925, with special reference to his own district.

2. These papers are of peculiar interest at the present time, when complete uncertainty prevails as to the probable course of the war on the frontier and as to the extent to which the new Resident-General intends, or will be able, to tackle questions affecting the relations between the French and the natives of this zone.

3. Colonel Mackereth's report brings out the fact that the situation of the French *vis-à-vis* of the definitely disaffected elements in the interior of the zone remained stationary during 1925. He inclines to the view that the present optimism regarding the war on the frontier, based on the apparent tendency to disintegration among Abd-el-Krim's supporters, is exaggerated. He points to various signs of growing discontent and dislike of the French among those native elements in the native population which are not actually disaffected, and he adverts to the necessity for measures to allay this potentially dangerous, though not very articulate, feeling.

4. It will be seen by my despatch No. 9 of the 26th January that M. Steeg is believed to contemplate a complete reorganisation of the system of dealing with native affairs. My latest information confirms what I had heard regarding the probable co-ordination of the "civil controls" and the service for native affairs which has hitherto formed part of the *renseignements* or military intelligence. It is believed that the immediate control of the joint service will be in the hands of M. Duclos, the Algerian official mentioned in paragraph 5 of the despatch just referred to. I am told that he is very capable. I do not know whether M. Duclos is himself to work under the direction of General Mougin, whom Colonel Mackereth describes as the new head of the Intelligence Service, but whose technical position is that of head of the Resident-General's military Cabinet. If General Mougin is cast for a leading rôle in matters of native policy and administration, I doubt very much, from what little I know of him, whether he possesses either the ability or the tact necessary to deal with large problems.

5. Apart, however, from any question of reorganisation of services or the superior personnel employed, M. Steeg will find himself confronted with fundamental difficulties. An attempt to curtail the power of the kaids from El Glaoui, the greatest of them, down to the little local despots, would be for the ultimate good of the population generally, but it would be attended by the immediate danger of antagonising the kaids themselves. The question of improving the quality of the rank and file of French subordinate officials, who are so widely accused of corruption or complaisance in presence of abuses, involves the double difficulty of recruiting suitable men and of improving

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their pay. M. Steeg's utterances on the latter subject have been sympathetic, but very vague. Finally, there is the eternal problem of the conflict between the interests of the French settlers and those of the natives. This conflict is not an absolute one, for a solution of some of the questions which are now being canvassed, like irrigation and agricultural credits, might be achieved without direct injury to the natives; but the question of finding land for an increased number of settlers is a much more difficult one to handle without incurring the reproach of favouring the European at the expense of the native.

6. I do not wish to suggest that, apart from the frontier situation, the French position in this country is one of danger. Indeed, I have myself been impressed by the absence during the last nine months of any serious repercussion in the French zone as a whole of the events in the north. What emerges from a general review of the state of affairs in French Morocco is that certain elements of instability do exist, and that the future administration of the country presents French statesmanship with considerable problems.

7. I am sending copies of this despatch and enclosures to His Majesty's consul-general at Tangier.

I have, &c.
ANDREW RYAN.

Enclosure 1 in No. 14.

Vice-Consul Mackereth to Sir A. Ryan.

(No. 5.)

Fez, January 19, 1926.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour of transmitting to you herewith a political report for the Fez consular district for the year 1926.

2. In a very large measure political activity and interest have revolved round the military operations imposed upon the French by the tribal uprising that occurred in the spring of last year. As the various phases of the rising and its suppression have been dealt with in detail by means of despatches at frequent intervals, I have thought it redundant to give more than the briefest possible summary of these events.

3. The political situation at the close of the year was very confused, and I have found it impossible to draw any conclusion that satisfies me as providing any clue to the future course of Moroccan politics. On the surface it seems to me that the position of the French occupation remains practically unchanged as compared with the state existing at the end of 1924. A little more territory has been occupied north of Taza, yet this result was only achieved by substantially increasing the military force, and it is impossible to say whether this state is a durable one or whether it depends solely upon the maintenance of a large and costly military force in Morocco. I have a distinct feeling that, politically, the French control in the Fez district has weakened, but, as public expression is stifled, it is extremely difficult to indicate with any confidence the exact extent of any increased hostility among the natives towards the protecting Power.

4. If France and Spain are able to stay the course in their war against Abd-el-Krim it appears probable that they will eventually defeat him. Such a victory, although unlikely, I think, to alter the relations between the French and the Moors, would reduce the possibility of any revolt attaining alarming proportions in the immediate future.

5. An improvement in the relations between the French and the Moors of the occupied territory can, I am convinced, only be brought about, if at all, by a considerable change in the French policy and methods of administration, particularly in so far as they concern dealings with the natives. It remains to be seen whether M. Steeg will be able to effect any improvement in this direction. The nomination of General Mougin to the head of the Intelligence Service does not, however, augur well according to many competent observers. General Mougin owes his appointment not, I am told, to any particular ability, but to a lifelong friendship with M. Steeg and M. Briand.

I have, &c.
GILBERT MACKERETH.

Enclosure 2 in No. 14.

Fez Political Report for the Year 1925.

Introduction.

POLITICAL interest in Morocco has centred round the activities of the Riff leader, Abd-el-Krim, and the tribes along the Franco-Spanish frontier, who, encouraged by him, rose in revolt in the spring. In consequence, no serious effort was made to reduce the strongholds of the factious tribesmen elsewhere. The year was one of rather more than average prosperity, chiefly on account of good harvests for the many and various crops grown in the district. The large influx of troops brought in from Algeria and France added, by their requirements, to the commercial movement and general prosperity. This state of well-being, it was thought, was an important deterrent to the spread of the revolt originating among the Ouergha tribes. The year closed with crops for 1926 in a very healthy and promising condition, due to exceptionally early rains; work was plentiful for all grades of manual labour, either for tillage, military roadmaking or house building, and, among the French and Europeans generally, there was a very definite feeling of optimism concerning an early resolution of the political difficulties.

Internal Politics.

Tafilelt.

It had been hoped at the end of 1924 that an advance might be made against Mahomet-ben-Kassim, but the increasing solidarity between Merebbi Rebbo, the Sous leader, Mahomet-ben-Kassim and the Ain Sefra chief, Mahomet-el-Abidine, indicated that it would be better to let sleeping dogs lie, especially in view of an increasing restlessness among the northern tribes, and the situation there remains unchanged.

Middle Atlas.

The position here has remained stationary throughout the year. Casualties among the French blockading garrison have been slight, but constant. During the summer they averaged about two a day, but since October the average fell to one a day.

Franco-Spanish Frontier.

1924 saw the French in definite possession of the rich Ouergha lands that had hitherto supplied a considerable amount of grain to the mountain tribesmen of the Riff. This fact reduced the rations of the Riffis and, perhaps, brought home to them better than could the exhortations of their leaders that the foreign enemy was in their midst and threatening to subdue them by starvation. In addition, the French redoubled their efforts at propaganda among the factious tribesmen. The propaganda, however, appears to have so irritated the Riffis that they turned out all the propagandists and confiscated the property of those who had received or encouraged them. Thus did the smouldering fire kindled by the French advance into the Ouergha in 1924 burst into flame in the Beni Zeroual in 1925. The rapidity with which this flame spread amazed even the hardest critics of the French protectorate, and it showed that the enlightened régime introduced into Morocco was lying like a squib on a barrel of gunpowder. Even the townsfolk, who have most to gain from the French occupation, were at no pains to hide their sympathies for the Riff leader. That the revolt was cut short on the line of the Fez–Taza road is greatly to the credit of the French Command, who prevented the union between the Beni Ouaraine and the Branes, tribes lying to the south and north of Taza respectively. Later, reinforcements from Algeria and France brought up the French forces to overwhelming strength and enabled the line held in 1924 to be re-established and, north of Taza, an advance to be made up to the northern limit of the French zone.

At the time of the outbreak of the revolt, the French had fourteen battalions guarding the whole front. Although desperate appeals were sent for reinforcements, these came too slowly, and eventually the troops of the protectorate, exhausted and demoralised by marches and counter-marches in the heat of summer in inhospitable

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

country, began to waver. Finally, after many anxious moments, sufficient forces arrived which enabled Marshal Pétain, who had been sent from France to direct the military operations, to reorganise the army in the field and put into operation a systematic advance against the revolting tribes. Following somewhat indefinite negotiations with Spain, a half-hearted combined Franco-Spanish offensive was undertaken, but apart from the fact that the two Powers attacked at the same time, no effective combination of effort occurred. Liaison was established in October at Sidi Ali-bou-Rekba, roughly half-way between Alhucemas, where the Spanish army landed a force, and Kifane, from where the French started a much-advertised "grande offensive." The liaison was, however, not maintained for reasons not disclosed.

Vague attempts at patching up peace were made from time to time, but none of them appeared to show that any of the parties were tired of fighting. In December the submission of a large part of the Senhadja confederation encouraged the French to believe that the Riffian tribes are breaking away from Abd-el-Krim, and that the Riff menace is on the point of disappearing through the break up of unity among the tribes. A like optimism has frequently been published abroad in the past and been belied by subsequent events. It may therefore be wise not to ignore native opinion, which says that Abd-el-Krim is steadily preparing to defend himself in the spring, and that the Riff tribes are far from being subdued.

Casualties and Costs.

The cost to the protectorate and France of the fighting in Morocco last year was, in lives, slightly heavier than in 1923, when the disastrous attempt was made to subdue the Middle Atlas. The casualties amounted to 11,419, excluding losses to local levies and foreign legionaries, of which no figures are available. Of this number, 3,800 were killed or missing. These figures do not include losses through sickness.

The cost in treasure, owing to an extensive use of modern and costly engines of war, was particularly heavy, and amounted up to the 1st December to about 1,800 millions of francs, or, at an average rate of exchange, to a little more than £15,000,000.

Native Feeling.

The readiness with which tribes that were not in range of physical menace of Riff reprisals threw in their lot with Abd-el-Krim may appear to the outside observer astonishing. The reason, however, is not far to seek. Even in highly civilised countries the foreigner is merely tolerated as a sojourner, and as a ruler he is always loathed. Morocco is a country where the more primitive instincts are nearer the surface, and where the discomfort and the danger of fighting are less dreaded, thus as soon as a supply of weapons filtered through from the Riff or had been seized from disaffected levies or fleeing soldiers, they were turned against the ruling foreigner. The revolt stopped when the further distribution of arms was prevented. It is a mistake to think that the French authorities in Morocco were unaware of this danger. In November 1924 Marshal Lyautey asked for a minimum additional reserve of twenty-five battalions, and intimated that forty battalions might be required. The Intelligence Service hoped that if a display of force could be maintained Abd-el-Krim would come to terms. The Government in Paris laughed at the marshal's fears, and sent three battalions rather than give a point-blank refusal. The head of the French intelligence service in Fez has always maintained that until a sufficiently large and virile European population can be encouraged to settle in Morocco, the country can be held only by force. He is a pessimist regarding the European settlement, and gives the French occupation, as did, I have been told, Marshal Lyautey, a term of thirty years. The enmity that arose out of last year's fighting did much damage to the relations between the French and the natives. Out of it has grown less fear of, and more dislike for, the European. Signs of this are not wanting. Several cases of minor strikes have occurred among natives working for Europeans. In the last three months of the year nine Europeans were murdered by natives in the Fez district, three between Taza and Fez, one on his farm between Fez and Sefrou, and the others in more isolated places.

The new Resident-General visited Fez in November and carried away with him many suggestions made by leading officials and notables for an alteration in the system of government, especially in so far as it concerns native affairs. The constant rivalry of interests between the Moors and the Europeans, who are gradually increasing in numbers in the rich region of Fez, have grown of late more and more acute, and the situation now demands that a definite and carefully prepared system for adjusting and

regulating these rivalries be put into force. So far, this question has been allowed to drift into a dangerous state, and the grievances of the natives in most cases remain unredressed. Their remedy lies usually with the French courts, whose working is so far beyond their comprehension that they have no confidence in the findings of the French judges. Another matter which urgently demands regulation is the control of the kaids, whose exactions have become all the more intolerable in view of the fact that they are supported by French authority and that, in consequence, the natural remedy of murdering the tyrant is no longer possible. Complaints, too, are widespread that in many cases officials charged with the controlling of these kaids have been forced to supplement the meagreness of their pay by sharing in the extortions of their charges.

A recent dahir concerning the assay-marking of gold and silver ornaments caused a universal outburst of feeling, and served to revive the discontent which was raised at the time of the replacement of the Hassani silver coinage by the French paper franc. It is difficult to discover a single effort made by the French that satisfies the native that its result is to his benefit. He feels constantly that an effort is being made to rob him, first of his liberty, to which he attaches great importance, and secondly to his wealth, and he is convinced that the courts of law are biased against him if he appeals to them against a Frenchman or is attacked in them by a Frenchman. As he does not feel that the precious gift of justice has accompanied the sweeping and sometimes irksome reforms, it is perhaps not surprising that native sympathy for the French has not increased. A change of policy is desirable and, I am told, M. Steeg is believed to have considerable changes in contemplation. He will make, it is said, a serious attempt to abolish the corruption which is all too common among the lower ranks of French officials, and to put an end to many practices that degrade the European before the native. A change of policy in native affairs is certainly urgently necessary, but enlightened Moors believe that unless this change gives greater liberty to the native and more authority to native counsels, matters will not be much mended. The value of the Majlis of Fez, the only native body, I believe, in Morocco, was often very apparent during the troubled times last summer when it exercised its calming influence, in its own way, on the local population. Its success would seem to indicate a means of placating, temporarily at least, native opinion.

The education policy has remained unchanged. There is a growing desire for Western culture, and steadily, though still in comparatively small numbers, the sons of richer natives are being sent abroad to find that education which is denied them at home.

The example of Turkey in disentangling itself from the tentacles of Islam is gradually finding approval among all but the greyest beards, and it is to be observed even in Fez, the city of religious fanaticism, that the Moslem religion is tending to become less theological and more political.

The Jewish element in the population continues to increase its influence, not only in commerce but in the local government, and when the year closed a large part of the male Jewish population had adopted the European habit of dress, earning thereby greater respect from the French officials.

1926 promises to be a year of the greatest interest to all observers of Moroccan affairs, and the course of events on the Franco-Spanish frontier may be expected to show whether France is capable of shouldering the burden of the protectorate she has undertaken and whether her grip on the country is likely to become more secure, or whether her power over the land is on the wane.

Fez, January 18, 1926.

[**W 3042/3042/28**] No. 15.

Consul Selous to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(*Received April* 13.)

(No. 22.)

Sir, *Casablanca, March* 30, 1926.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 45 of the 14th October last enclosing a memorandum by His Majesty's vice-consul at Marrakesh on the political situation in South Morocco, I now have the honour to transmit to you herewith a further most instructive memorandum on this subject by the same officer.

2. Mr. Vice-Consul Were has dealt so comprehensively with his subject that little or nothing remains to be said. I will, therefore, avail of this opportunity only

to endorse Mr. Were's remarks in paragraph 4 and to emphasise the fact that there are certain weak points in the land tenure legislation introduced by the Protectorate Government into this zone of a regrettable character, which allow of serious abuse not only by powerful personalities, such as the Glaoui, but also on occasion by the Administration itself.

I have, &c.
S. H. SELOUS.

Enclosure in No. 15.

Memorandum on the Political Situation in the Marrakesh District.

IN my memorandum of the 5th October, 1925, I expressed the opinion that a successful issue to the policy of France in South Morocco was more than ever bound up with the continued wise and diplomatic use of the services of the Glaoui, who alone of his compeers retained intact his hereditary power and prestige; and adverted to the possibility, following upon the probable appointment of a civilian resident in Morocco, of a precipitate change in the relations of the protecting Power with that chieftain which might expose the untutored Atlas tribes to the perturbing influence of elements inimical to European penetration.

2. Five months have now elapsed since M. Steeg entered upon his duties as the first civilian representative of France in Morocco, and the only outward and visible sign of the new era, in so far as Marrakesh and the Atlas region are in any way affected, is the change of title of the Intelligence Service from " Service des Renseignements," to " Service des Affaires indigènes," an innovation which, though no doubt of the highest importance, bureaucratically speaking, is scarcely likely to have any far-reaching effect upon the political situation.

3. It is perhaps as yet too early to say that M. Steeg has no intention of varying his predecessor's policy in his dealings with the Glaoui; he himself has disclaimed any such intention; but I can vouch from personal observation for the fact that the relations of these two protagonists are at present tinged with mutual suspicion amounting almost to hostility, in striking contrast with the spirit of affectionate raillery which animated the meetings of Marshal Lyautey and the Berber chieftain. M. Steeg is, for a Frenchman, unusually reserved, a characteristic which is unfavourably commented upon even by his compatriots, and while it is, of course, no reflection upon his statesmanlike qualities that he is constitutionally incapable of unbending to the same extent as the marshal, who contrived to combine " bonhomie " and authority in a remarkable degree, his frigidity of demeanour is such as to delay considerably, if not to render utterly impossible, the establishment of that cordial and elastic understanding with the one outstanding native personality in South Morocco, which is indispensable if the policy initiated by the marshal is to be prosecuted to a successful conclusion.

4. The possibility of any impending defection of the Glaoui may, however, be at once dismissed. Under no other régime conceivable in Morocco could he enjoy equal liberty to pursue his own interests, which lie in the accumulation of the greatest possible store of wealth in the shortest possible time by such methods as are least open to unfriendly criticism. His procedure is ingeniously simple. The land registration laws introduced by the French provide that a good title to land is secured to any person whose application, after due notice given thereof, remains unopposed by other claimants. By judicious selection of land the real owners of which, being natives subject to his authority, are open to intimidation, he has contrived to obtain unexceptionable titles to a large portion of the countryside, of which he promptly disposes to French companies for hard cash. He has indeed enjoyed such impunity in this respect that he has of late become emboldened to embark on similar land-jumping exploits at the expense of Europeans, in some instances with success, owing to the existence of the " mot d'ordre," not yet repealed, that a blind eye must be turned whenever possible to his misdeeds. I have heard it said that he is bound before long to overreach himself in such matters and seriously to embroil himself with the French authorities. There can be no doubt that he has over and again furnished them with a plausible excuse for taking disciplinary measures against him in this respect, but hitherto he has been allowed to go his way unhampered, and though he cannot count with certainty on a continuance of such forbearance he is probably assured of ample warning from official quarters of any projected tightening of control.

5. The net result of these activities is that in the more immediate vicinity of Marrakesh (ignoring for the moment the remoter districts of the Atlas, where the inhabitants know little and care less about the acquisitive methods of their overlord) there are four distinct parties in opposition the one to the other—the French Administration, the Glaoui and his hangers-on, the French settlers striving to extract a living from their farms, and the native agricultural population. Of these the last named are the most to be pitied, for they suffer alike from the depredations of the Glaoui and his adherents, from the almost equally well-developed land and water grabbing propensities of their European competitors, from the fiscal inroads of the protectorate, and from the continued depreciation of the French, and therefore of the Moroccan, currency in terms of dollars or sterling, and have little or no opportunity of obtaining a hearing for their just complaints. The French settlers, in addition to the dislike engendered by the conflict of their desires, legitimate and illegitimate, with those of the Glaoui and of the native farmers, are imbued with a rather Bolshevistic spirit *vis-à-vis the* Administration, which they criticise freely and in general quite unjustly on a variety of grounds. The Administration is divided between its desire to fall in, wherever possible, with the wishes of the vociferous European element, its anxiety to impress on the inarticulate native population the benefits of French rule, and its fear of transgressing the rule " hands off the Glaoui," laid down by headquarters for its guidance. The Glaoui alone is in a position and is quite content to " smile and smile and be a villain," a pleasing and remunerative attitude and one fraught with no very serious consequences in the circumstances.

6. Were it, however, necessary to consider only the completely pacified portions of the Marrakesh region there can be little doubt that a curb would soon be placed on the arbitrary actions of the Glaoui, and that his fall from power would be greeted with almost universal acclamation. There remain, unfortunately for France and for Marrakesh, the remoter portions of his domain, tucked away in the Atlas mountains. There French control is vague and illusory, and the Glaoui has not as yet alienated the allegiance of the inhabitants by his exactions, principally because there is little to extract; and that territory continues to constitute a potential focus of danger to the stability of the French régime, given such circumstances as the disappearance of the Glaoui before his authority has been superseded by that of the protectorate, and, in particular, the establishment of contact with dissident bodies from elsewhere. Such contact might conceivably be brought about by the percolation southwards, along the line of the Middle Atlas, of disaffected elements from the " Tache de Taza," or by an incursion of the restless and largely nomad inhabitants of Jebel Sarro or of Tafilelt into the villages of the Atlas. But of neither of these possible eventualities is there at present the slightest tangible sign, for the occasional reports of attacks upon military posts in the Tadla district, and of casualties suffered there, are indicative of no more than the presence of isolated robber bands who will risk much to obtain the rifles and ammunition, otherwise unprocurable, necessary for the intimidation of their neighbours.

7. There would thus seem on the whole to be little fear of any extension to the Marrakesh district, in the near future, of the difficulties facing the French on the front north of Fez. The country is not yet ripe for rebellion, but with every month of campaigning that passes without a settlement being effected in the north the recollection of their early defeats at the hands of the French grows fainter in the minds of the southern tribes, the old spirit of intolerance and contempt for the Christian revives, and dreams of Moorish independence and invincibility take more concrete shape. More especially does this appear to be the case in the country districts adjoining Mogador (Haha and Chiadma), where the French encountered determined opposition at the time of the occupation, and where they suffered several disastrous reverses; there sporadic outbreaks may quite possibly occur in the near future, and though such unrest may not be likely to spread immediately and directly to Marrakesh there would be some danger, if the rising or risings were not quickly and easily suppressed, of a linking up with the unsubdued and warlike tribes of the anti-Atlas immediately to the south. It is naturally somewhat of a commonplace to say that France, faced simultaneously with threats to the northern and southern confines of her protectorate, would be hard put to it to stave off an all-destroying conflagration embracing the whole of her North African Empire, but the triteness of the observation does not, I think, detract from its truth.

C. A. W. WERE.

Marrakesh, March 25, 1926.

CHAPTER III.—TANGIER ZONE.

(a.) Spain and the Tangier Question.

[W 384/76/28] No. 16.

Sir H. Rumbold to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(*Received January* 18.)

(No. 6.) *Madrid, January* 6, 1926.

Sir,

I WAS received in audience by the King of Spain on the 2nd instant.

2. His Majesty appeared to be keenly interested in my recent mission to the Balkans as chairman of the commission to enquire into the Græco-Bulgarian frontier incident. After I had given His Majesty a brief account of the work of the commission, the King spoke about Captain Gordon Canning's visit to Paris.

3. His Majesty asked me what I should say if he caused Captain Gordon Canning to be interned, as he should like to do if that officer came to Spain. Captain Gordon Canning was practically in the service of the enemies of his country. I replied that the suggested internment of Captain Canning would be a mistake from every point of view. There would be no justification for such a measure. For one thing, it would give Captain Canning a great advertisement. M. Briand had dealt with him, and I did not see what further action was necessary. The King then said that the question was a hypothetical one, inasmuch as he understood that Captain Gordon Canning was returning, or had returned, to Morocco viâ Marseilles, thus avoiding Spanish territory.

4. His Majesty went on to revert to a subject which is much in his mind and in that of General Primo de Rivera, namely, the proposed inclusion of Tangier in the Spanish zone. He produced the familiar argument in support of this suggestion, namely, that Tangier was a base of supplies for and a centre of intrigue in favour of Abd-el-Krim and his supporters. 25,000 Spanish troops were occupied in watching for and preventing the above-mentioned supplies from reaching Abd-el-Krim (I understand that 6,000 Spanish troops are in reality employed on this duty). His Majesty went on to say that, if only Tangier were in the Spanish zone, he would be able to reduce the number of Spanish troops in Morocco. The King said that he would be glad to see us occupy the international zone, but, if we did not want it, why should not we let Spain include it in her zone?

5. I did not, of course, encourage His Majesty in this line of argument, and merely said that a year's working of the new régime at Tangier had proved satisfactory from many points of view. I then quoted some of the results obtained by the new administration as set forth in your despatch No. 4060 to Paris of the 9th ultimo. His Majesty said this might be the case, but that the results were not so satisfactory for the finances of his country.

I have, &c.
HORACE RUMBOLD.

P.S.—A semi-official communiqué was published in the press of the 10th instant to the effect that Captain Gordon Canning had passed through Madrid last Wednesday, the 6th instant, on his way from Paris to Tangier. On arrival at Madrid he had sent a letter to the Minister of War asking for an interview with the Government. He had been informed in reply that the Government could neither receive him nor have anything to do with him. Captain Gordon Canning left the following morning for Tangier.

2. In conversation with me to-day General Primo de Rivera confirmed the statement regarding Captain Gordon Canning's visit to Madrid. He said that the French police had kept an eye on Captain Gordon Canning as far as the frontier, and that the Spanish police had watched him during his brief stay in Spain. The Spanish Government had had no difficulty in turning Captain Gordon Canning down, because no Parliament was in session in Spain and there was a press censorship. M. Briand's task had been more difficult, as he was hampered in his attitude towards Captain Gordon Canning by men of the type of M. Malvy and by a certain section of the French press.

3. General Primo de Rivera was, as usual, optimistic about the state of affairs in Morocco. Abd-el-Krim was losing ground every day, and the general foresaw that the end of the Moroccan campaign was not far off. He informed me that, if within the

next few days the weather in Morocco was as fine as it is in Spain just now, the Spaniards would undertake some small military operations which would still further harass Abd-el-Krim.

H. R.

[W 797/5/28] No. 17.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Sir H. Rumbold (*Madrid*).

(No. 57.) *Foreign Office, February* 1, 1926.

Sir,

THE Spanish Ambassador asked for an early interview after my return, and I accordingly received him this afternoon.

His principal object was to speak to me of the compromising proceedings of Messrs. Gordon-Canning and Gardiner and Mrs. Arnall in Tangier. I told him that, if proceedings were taken for their expulsion under article 10, we should raise no difficulties, but I was not prepared to instruct the British consul-general to act on his own initiative.

The Ambassador also mentioned the proposals for an arbitration treaty, which he had foreshadowed in a letter addressed to me just before I left for Geneva and had subsequently formally presented at the Foreign Office. He expressed a fear that his Government would be rather disappointed by the dilatory character of the reply which we had returned. I had not yet had an opportunity of informing myself as to the character of his proposals or of our answer. I therefore replied by saying that I would look into the matter, adding only a few general observations on the attitude of His Majesty's Government towards suggestions for compulsory arbitration.

I am, &c.
AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

[W 2377/76/28] No. 18

Sir H. Rumbold to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(*Received March* 22.)

(No. 109.) *Madrid, March* 18, 1926.

Sir,

ALTHOUGH of recent times the Spanish Government have complained less frequently than before of the unfavourable reaction of the present régime in the international zone of Tangier on their operations in Morocco, they have never become reconciled to that régime. Within the last few days the King has spoken both to the military attaché and to myself on the subject, hinting broadly that Tangier ought properly to have been included in the Spanish zone. The President of the Council also alluded to this matter when I communicated to him on the 15th instant the substance of your telegram No. 1 from Geneva.

2. The allusions to the Tangier zone both on the part of the King and of General Primo de Rivera led me to suppose that His Majesty and his Prime Minister had conceived the idea of turning the situation at Geneva to account by proposing some sort of a bargain in connection with the attitude of Spain towards the League. The bargain seemed to consist in Spain's agreeing to the postponement of the consideration of her claim to a permanent seat in return for a modification in her favour of the present régime at Tangier. This supposition was confirmed by the proposal made by the King at the audience which I had of His Majesty on the 17th instant.

3. At that audience the King proposed that Spain should be given a mandate for five years over the international zone of Tangier. The affairs of that zone might be administered by an international commission, on which I understood that all those Powers which had either adhered or not adhered to the Tangier Statute were to be represented by one or even two members. No Jews or natives would sit on this council, which, to use His Majesty's expression, would be "exclusively composed of Christians." There would also be an international municipality. Such was, briefly, His Majesty's proposal, which, he explained, was destined to satisfy public opinion as a compensation for the postponement of the consideration of the claim of Spain to a permanent seat.

4. The King complained that for many years past nothing had been done for Spain. When she had lost her colonies she had had to shoulder the debt incurred by her in connection with public works in Cuba and in the Phillipines, although the Americans had benefited by the sums so spent. Spain had derived no advantages from the subsequent international arrangements to which she had been a party. Quite the reverse, in fact, since her zone in Morocco had been largely diminished. In fact, she had always paid the piper without calling the tune.

5. At the present moment even the "Times" correspondent at Tangier—who could not be accused of any particular friendship for Spain—stated openly that the Tangier Statute was a failure and that the international zone should be included in the Spanish zone. The statute could not, in fact, succeed if countries like Italy and the United States declined to adhere to it. But, apart from the foregoing arguments, there was the further argument of the expense in men and money which the existence of the international zone was causing Spain. In anticipation of my audience the King had ready to his hand statistics showing the number of officers, men, guns, &c., locked up in the 146 posts distributed around the zone, in order to prevent the natives within that zone from sending supplies of all kinds to Abd-el-Krim. These statistics likewise included the number of the rations supplied to the garrisons of these posts and the annual expense of the same. These posts were, in fact, a serious drain on Spanish man-power and finances. His Majesty asked me what prospect there was of your accepting his proposal, and added with disarming frankness that, having regard to the circumstances in which he had made it, it was perhaps "a somewhat dirty proposal." By this His Majesty meant that it partook of the nature of blackmail.

6. I replied that in my personal opinion His Majesty's proposal had little chance of success. I thought it was premature to condemn the international statute as a failure. It had not been given a sufficiently long trial. Moreover, I remembered having told His Majesty not so long ago that the finances at all events of the Assembly were good. I added that I could not see any connection between the question of a Spanish mandate over the international zone and the acceptance of the claim of Spain to a permanent seat on the Council. It seemed difficult to admit the principle that the attitude of any particular country towards the League should be determined by bargains of the nature which His Majesty had suggested. The matter then dropped.

7. I have reported this proposal at some length because I do not anticipate that the King or the Spanish Government will let it rest. According to my information Franco-Spanish operations against Abd-el-Krim will commence in May and are expected to last a fortnight. It may be that they will succeed in finally disposing of Abd-el-Krim, in which case the necessity of encircling the international zone with a chain of posts would presumably disappear. But if the French and Spanish forces do not dispose of Abd-el-Krim, it is to be foreseen that the Spanish Government will become more insistent in their suggestion that the international zone be included within their zone, as they may well attribute any failure to settle Abd-el-Krim to the hampering existence of the international zone.

I have, &c.
HORACE RUMBOLD.

[W 2657/76/28]

No. 19.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Sir H. Rumbold (Madrid).

(No. 176.)

Foreign Office, April 14, 1926.

Sir,

I HAVE been for some time preoccupied by the continued failure of the Spanish Government to co-operate loyally in the execution of the Tangier Convention. Since the day when they set their seal to that instrument they have never, as far as I can judge, shown any real desire for its success, and their desire to see it fail, at first decently cloaked, but lately repeatedly betrayed in conversations with the military attaché and yourself, cannot but produce a most unfavourable impression on His Majesty's Government.

2. I am aware that the Spanish Government, slow to abandon their cherished hopes, not only entered the Tangier Conference with reluctance, but proclaimed themselves dissatisfied with its result. I had hoped, however, that the passage of time would have tempered their disappointment and shown them the wisdom of accepting the internationalisation of Tangier, as the only solution capable of

reconciling the interests of all concerned. So far from this being the case, evidence of their hope of finally wrecking the convention as a first step to the incorporation of Tangier in the Spanish zone is accumulating rapidly.

3. At the time when there was fair prospect of securing the accession of Italy to the convention, the negotiations were wrecked by the action of the Spanish representative in Rome in encouraging the Italian Government to hold out for further concessions. More recently, the Spanish press campaign against the existing régime has been intensified under official inspiration. Spanish officials in Tangier make no secret that the Spanish Government, with the avowed object of ruining Tangier by depriving it of its transit trade with the Spanish zone, are contemplating the withdrawal of their consent to the temporary suspension of the inter-zonal customs dues prescribed by article 20 of the convention. Finally, as your Excellency is only too painfully aware, both the King and the Director have stooped to what His Majesty himself admitted to be a "dirty proposal" in their recent attempt to buy the consent of His Majesty's Government to the incorporation of Tangier in the Spanish zone as the price of the postponement of the Spanish claim to a permanent seat on the Council of the League of Nations. The remarkable part which Spain had played in the Council of the League and the great and well-deserved influence which the Spanish representative, Señor Quinones de León, had succeeded in acquiring for his country and himself had predisposed us to favour Spain's claim to a permanent seat, but your reports of the attitude of the authorities in Madrid have produced a very disagreeable impression and show that it is time that the Spanish Government should be brought into contact with realities. Nothing but harm can result from their remaining under any delusion in regard to the position of His Majesty's Government.

4. I shall be glad if you will take an opportunity of speaking to General Primo de Rivera, with courtesy of course, but not less firmly, on this question, with a view to opening his eyes to the impossibility of the realisation of the Spanish pretensions, and to convincing him once and for all that His Majesty's Government have no intention of departing from their traditional policy of denying Tangier to any single Mediterranean Power. As you are already familiar with the factors on which that policy is based, it is unnecessary for me to repeat them. If you are met with the usual argument that Tangier serves as a base for supply for Abd-el-Krim and that the patrolling of the frontier thus entailed is a heavy drain on the Spanish resources, you may say that I am not impressed by it. There is no evidence that the insignificant quantity of supplies which is smuggled through the Spanish cordon, or the activities of a handful of irresponsible adventurers, have been of any appreciable assistance to the rebels. On the other hand, the measures necessary for the defence of Tangier, if the international régime were terminated, would surely involve at least as great, if not a greater, strain on the forces at the disposal of the Spanish command.

5. These, however, are but secondary considerations. The essential point is that Spain, as a signatory of the Tangier Convention, shares with this country and France the responsibility for making a success of the international régime. We have a right to expect that a country with the long traditions of Spain should scrupulously observe its international obligations. His Majesty's Government, for their part, have no intention of renouncing the advantages bestowed by the convention nor of shirking the responsibilities imposed by it. They have impressed time and again upon the Spanish Government that, if it had not been for the promises given to this country, the French Government would never have consented to deal with the Tangier problem in conference. Had they not so consented, Great Britain and Spain would have had little remaining influence in Tangier to-day. In a few years' time they would have had none.

6. Taking all things into consideration, the operation of the statute, during the short time it has been in existence, has justified the hopes that were placed on it. With more cordial and sincere co-operation on the part of the Spanish Government, there is no reason why it should not prove a complete success, and redound alike to the credit and the advantage of Spain as well as the other parties primarily concerned. But whether it succeeds or fails, and whatever be the ultimate future of Tangier, there is one solution upon which no prudent Government will base its policy, for too many Powers are interested in the Mediterranean and in Northern Africa, to consent to Tangier becoming the individual possession of any one of them.

I am, &c.
AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

[W 3469/76/28] No. 20.

Sir H. Rumbold to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(*Received April* 26.)

(No. 176.) *Madrid, April* 22, 1926.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that, in pursuance of the instructions contained in your despatch No. 176 of the 14th instant, I asked the President of the Council to receive me to-day to talk to him about the question of the Tangier international zone.

2. I began the interview by saying that I had attended a lecture given a few days ago by Señor Yanguas on the attitude of Spain towards the League of Nations, the Tangier question, and Spanish-American relations, and had listened with great satisfaction to his Excellency's statement that Spain would honour her signature to the Paris Convention, would co-operate in the application of the statute, and would continue to endeavour to secure the adherence of those nations which had not yet signed the statute. I read the relevant passage of Señor Yanguas's statement, as published in the press, in Spanish to General Primo de Rivera, and said that I had informed you of its substance. I had, however, in the meanwhile received instructions from you to define once and for all the attitude of His Majesty's Government towards the Spanish aspirations for the incorporation of Tangier in the Spanish zone.

3. I reminded his Excellency of the recent conversations which I had had with the King and with himself at the time of the last session of the Council of the League. I had distinctly understood from those conversations that the proposal was that Spain would agree to postpone her claim to a permanent seat on the Council of the League of Nations in return for a mandate, say, for five years over the Tangier international zone. General Primo de Rivera said that I had accurately reported the suggestion made by the King and himself. He would only modify the suggestion by saying that Spain would waive, *i.e.*, drop her demand for a permanent seat on the Council of the League of Nations in return for a mandate over the Tangier international zone. In reply to my question as to what was the connection between Spain's candidature for a permanent seat on the Council and a Spanish mandate over the international zone, General Primo de Rivera said that if Spain consented to waive her candidature for a permanent seat she must have something with which she could satisfy public opinion in this country.

4. I reminded his Excellency that about a year ago he had, in speaking of the Tangier zone and of Spanish aspirations for a more satisfactory arrangement there from the Spanish point of view, observed that he realised that the traditional policy of England was likely to be a bar to the realisation of those aspirations. I told him that he had, on that occasion, correctly defined the probable attitude of His Majesty's Government in this matter, and I went on to read to him the last two pages of your despatch under reference.

5. As I anticipated, his Excellency asserted that Tangier served as a base of supplies for Abd-el-Krim, and that the Spaniards had to lock up 10,000 men in maintaining a cordon round the international zone to prevent such supplies from reaching the rebels. I informed the general that you were not impressed by these arguments, and that there was no evidence that the insignificant quantity of supplies which might have been smuggled through the Spanish cordon, or the activities of a few adventurers or agents had been of any appreciable assistance to Abd-el-Krim. On the other hand, I pointed out that, if the international régime had been terminated, the Spaniards would have had to employ a considerable force of troops to protect Tangier and the zone around it.

6. General Primo de Rivera replied that the international zone lay within the borders of the Anjera tribe, which had been disarmed. I said that I was under the impression that the tribe in question had only been recently disarmed, and that if no international zone had existed at the time, say, of the Spanish retreat from Sheshauen and before the establishment of the Primo de Rivera line, Tangier would have been exposed to very serious attacks. I added that if and when the Franco-Spanish forces succeeded in disposing of Abd-el-Krim, there would anyhow be no further necessity to maintain a cordon of troops round the international zone.

7. As regards the statement that Spain, as a signatory to the Tangier Convention, shared with Great Britain and France the responsibility for making a success of the international régime, and that His Majesty's Government had the right to expect this country scrupulously to observe its international obligation,

General Primo de Rivera said that she would certainly honour her signature. This did not, however, prevent Spain from having aspirations that the régime in the international zone should eventually be modified so as to be more in keeping with Spanish interests, according to the conception of the Spanish Government. Spain did not wish to exercise sovereignty over Tangier and its zone, and would undertake not to construct any defences towards the sea.

8. I informed him that His Majesty's Government had no intention of renouncing the advantages bestowed by the convention, nor of shirking the responsibilities imposed by it. His Excellency said that he failed to see what were those advantages. He agreed, however, that the Paris Convention which dealt with the Tangier problem had only been rendered possible in consequence of promises made by France to Great Britain.

9. General Primo de Rivera dissented from your opinion that, taking all things into consideration, the operation of the statute—during the short time it had been in existence—had justified the hopes which had been placed in it. The statute could not be a success as long as Italy and the United States stayed out. I reminded him that the Minister for Foreign Affairs had undertaken to co-operate in securing the adherence of the two above-mentioned countries to the statute. Finally, having finished reading to him the second portion of your despatch under reply, I enquired whether I had made the position of His Majesty's Government in this matter so clear as to show him that it was not possible for Spanish aspirations for a modification of the régime in the Tangier international zone to be realised. He replied that I had made the position perfectly clear. He was afraid, however, that you did not properly appreciate the reasons for the Spanish aspirations.

10. General Primo de Rivera then again referred to the continuous drain which the Moroccan problem entailed on Spanish resources in men and money. This drain could not go on. He was sceptical about the present preliminary conversations with Abd-el-Krim leading to any result, in which case military operations would be resumed at once and repeated, if necessary, in the autumn. But if they even then had no definite result, Spain would probably ask for a conference to be summoned to consider the position in Morocco. Spain would declare that she could no longer assume any responsibility for events in her zone, and would leave the solution of the difficulties in that zone to ourselves or to France.

I have, &c.
HORACE RUMBOLD.

[W 3488/76/28] No. 21.

Sir H. Rumbold to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(*Received April* 26.)

(No. 181.)
(Extract.) *Madrid, April* 23, 1926.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 134 of the 30th March, I have the honour to inform you that Señor Yanguas delivered a further lecture on the 17th instant on the subject of Spain and the League of Nations, the Tangier question and America. These lectures are clearly intended to afford an opportunity of instructing public opinion in this country and, in the absence of parliamentary debates, of expressing the views of the Government on current questions.

* * * * * *

5. Señor Yanguas then turned to the question of Tangier, and spoke as follows:—

"Tangier has always attracted the attention of the Chanceries, especially of those nations which are essentially maritime.

6. "Spain has never concealed her aspirations. Lerroux, Garcia Prieto and Maura in the debates of 1921 expressed identical views, and Maura said that a Spanish Tangier did not imply a desire for sovereign rights like those over Melilla and Ceuta, but the incorporation of the city in the Spanish zone on the same terms as the rest of it. This affirmation has been maintained throughout all the subsequent political fluctuations, which is a proof that it was founded upon reality. In opposition thereto, aspirations worthy of respect were raised by others, and Spain showed a spirit of conciliation and harmony which deserved the consideration of the

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world. She did not oppose any of the various formulæ, which were the following: In 1904, that of a special régime; at the Conference of Algeciras, that of nationalisation with police and banking establishments; in 1912, that of a special régime, which did not achieve any practical result in the two years during which the deliberations at Madrid lasted. Then came the Great War, when there was an interruption, and so it went on until in 1923 the problem was examined at the Preliminary Conference in London and subsequently at the Paris Conference, where our negotiators—the Marqués de Torrehermosa and Señor Aguirre de Carcer—who are doing me the honour of listening to me now, succeeded in signing the present statute. The statute is a complicated machine, and to its complexity must be added the fact that all the nations concerned have not accepted it—for instance, Italy and the United States—which makes the problem still more difficult.

7. "I must point out that Spain showed herself prepared for sacrifices and signed the statute, which she fulfils and applies loyally. She has been in advance of all the other nations—as, for instance, in the matter of editing the Codes for the Mixed Tribunal. It is Spain, too, who has endeavoured to secure the adhesion of the other Powers. If the machinery of the statute has not yet been translated into a reality, it is not the fault of Spain, and no such imputation can ever be made against her.

8. "If we examine the problem with an objective judgment, we can say that Tangier does not possess such importance as formerly from either a strategical or a commercial point of view. Other harbours detract from its commercial value, and strategically it does not possess extraordinary importance, especially with modern artillery.

9. "Further, if Tangier had been given to the Spanish zone it would not have been fortified, because, whatever the formula might be, Tangier would always be neutral. France and England, in article 3 of their treaty, which was secret until a short time ago, agreed that their two Governments should grant a zone in the neighbourhood of Ceuta and Melilla to Spain with a view to guaranteeing the Straits. Nothing was said about Tangier. But the same considerations existed for Tangier as for other places. Further, Tangier is situated within the area of the Spanish Protectorate."

10. At this point Señor Yanguas read out an article by the "Times" correspondent at Tangier, in which the latter declared, among other things, that the local interests of the city had always been sacrificed to political considerations, that Tangier was a sanctuary for rebels, and that it could not subsist alone, but would perish if separated from the Spanish zone.

11. "In spite of this," continued the Minister of State, "Spain stands where she stood when she signed the Paris Convention, and she will honour her signature. We shall collaborate in the application of the statute and we shall continue to endeavour to secure the adhesion of those nations which have not as yet signed it."

12. The last part of his lecture was devoted by Señor Yanguas to relations between Spain and America. After referring to the racial ties between them, he remarked that the successive declarations of the independence of the Latin American States had removed all causes of dissension and had strengthened the spiritual ties which bound them to Spain.

13. There were three classes of relationship: that of Spain with the Ibaro-American countries, that between North, Central and South America, and that between the United States and Spain. They were three independent bonds which, however, far from conflicting with each other, completed each other and formed, as it were, the three sides of what might be called a political triangle. It would, he declared, be desirable that at the forthcoming Exhibition at Seville an Ibero-American conference should be held, at which various problems could be discussed and at which treaties of conciliation and arbitration on the lines of the Locarno Pact might be elaborated.

14. After referring to the negotiations for a treaty with Cuba, Señor Yanguas concluded by stating that, in order to facilitate such treaties with South American countries, the Government had agreed to prolong the facilities for granting them special commercial concessions in excess of the 20 per cent. reductions on the second column rates of the tariff.

I have, &c.
HORACE RUMBOLD.

(b.) Accession of Italy to the Tangier Statute.

[W 11786/18/28] No. 22.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to the Marquess of Crewe (Paris).

(No. 116.)
Foreign Office, January 12, 1926.

My Lord,

SINCE my despatch No. 4248 was drafted I have received your Lordship's despatch No. 2761 of the 23rd ultimo, in which you enclosed a copy of a note from the French Government on the subject of Mr. Clive's proposals for securing the accession of Italy to the Tangier Convention.

2. I cannot regard M. Briand's reply as satisfactory. It is possible, though I do not think so, that His Majesty's Government are mistaken in thinking that the Tangier Statute will fail if the present state of affairs is indefinitely prolonged, but there can be no doubt whatever that the accession of Italy is highly desirable and that every effort should be made in the interest of Tangier to secure it. I readily agree to the French Government taking the initiative, provided that they really intend to do so, and that soon. So far, however, they have shown no disposition to act, and time is slipping away.

3. As the French Government do not agree to the British proposal, which still appears to me reasonable and calculated to effect the object in view, His Majesty's Government are justified in asking what they propose to substitute for it. I am fully aware of the French contention in regard to the Franco-Italian Agreement of 1912, and I entirely agree with it. Since, however, the Italian Government categorically refuse to admit the French interpretation of the agreement and since the French Government have more than once rejected the suggestion that the point should be submitted to international arbitration, it is difficult to see how any progress is to be made by passive reliance on the 1912 agreement. In the view of His Majesty's Government the situation at Tangier demands early action, and they must urge the French Government strongly either to produce counter-proposals of their own without delay or to agree to the British proposal.

4. I request that you will convey the substance of this despatch to M. Briand either verbally or in writing as you think best, and that you will do your utmost to extract an early and definite reply.

I am, &c.
AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

[W 331/76/28] No. 23.

The Marquess of Crewe to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received January 15.)

(No. 88.)

HIS Majesty's representative at Paris presents his compliments to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to transmit herewith copy of an *aide-mémoire* which has been sent to M. Briand respecting the accession of Italy to the Tangier Convention.

Paris, January 14, 1926.

Enclosure in No. 23.

Aide-mémoire.

HIS Excellency the President of the Council will recollect the terms of the *aide-mémoire* communicated to His Majesty's Embassy by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on the 23rd December on the subject of Tangier.

That memorandum contained certain observations respecting proposals made by His Majesty's representative at Tangier for securing the accession of Italy to the Tangier Convention. With regard to those observations, His Majesty's Ambassador is

instructed to say that His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs is fully aware of the French contention in regard to the Franco-Italian Agreement of 1912, and is in entire agreement with it. Since, however, the Italian Government categorically refuses to admit the French interpretation of the agreement, and since the Government of the republic has more than once rejected the suggestion that the point should be submitted to international arbitration, it is difficult to see how any progress is to be made by passive reliance on that agreement. In the view of His Majesty's Government, the situation at Tangier demands early attention, and the Marquess of Crewe is therefore instructed strongly to urge the Government of the republic either to produce its own counter-proposals with the least possible delay or to agree to the proposals made by Mr. Clive and submitted to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on the 18th December.

Lord Crewe is instructed to express the hope that it may be possible to return an early reply to this communication.

Paris, January 14, 1926.

[W 438/76/28] No. 24.

The Marquess of Crewe to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 116)

HIS Majesty's representative at Paris presents his compliments to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to transmit herewith copy of a note from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs respecting the accession of Italy to the Tangier Convention.

Paris, January 19, 1926.

Enclosure in No. 24.

Note from French Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

PAR son aide-mémoire du 14 janvier, son Excellence l'Ambassadeur de Sa Majesté britannique, en réponse à la communication du Département des Affaires étrangères, en date du 23 décembre dernier, marque à nouveau le caractère d'urgence que revêt à son avis l'adhésion désirée de l'Italie au Statut de Tanger, et demande au Gouvernement français soit d'adhérer au projet de conférence mis en avant par Mr. Clive, soit de formuler ses propres contre-propositions.

Le Gouvernement français n'attache pas moins de prix que le Gouvernement britannique à ce qu'une décision rapide intervienne.

D'autre part, il pense être entièrement d'accord avec lui en souhaitant que le statut ne soit pas remis en question dans des conditions qui puissent créer à Tanger une situation plus difficile encore que celle à laquelle on cherche à porter remède. C'est en se plaçant à ce point de vue que le Département des Affaires étrangères avait fait des objections du projet de revision partielle du statut proposé par Mr. Clive (et limité, dans la pensée de son auteur, "à certains articles tels que ceux concernant la gendarmerie, les douanes et le régime des jeux"), et, plus encore, exprimé ses craintes quant à la réunion à Tanger de la conférence proposée par Mr. Clive.

Un fait nouveau vient d'ailleurs de se produire. Le Gouvernement italien, instruit, à Tanger même, des projets de Mr. Clive, en a saisi le prétexte pour faire approcher le Gouvernement français, en marquent le désir de reprendre la conversation au sujet de son adhésion au Statut de Tanger.

Dans un entretien qu'il a eu avec le Directeur politique, le 14 janvier, le conseiller de l'Ambassade d'Italie a indiqué que son Gouvernement serait très heureux qu'on trouvât une formule qui lui permette d'adhérer au statut et qu'il espérait vivement que cela pourrait se faire. M. Summonte doit revenir voir dans quelques jours M. Laroche avec des instructions de Rome.

Le Gouvernement français espère que la conversation ainsi reprise permettra de dégager rapidement quelle est la nouvelle position de l'Italie en cette affaire.

Le Gouvernement français, qui a, comme le sait le Gouvernement britannique, des raisons propres à faire valoir pour obtenir au moindre prix l'adhésion de l'Italie, ne

manquera pas de tenir l'Ambassade de Sa Majesté britannique exactement informée des progrès de cet échange de vues, qui, tout en étant propre à ménager l'amour-propre légitime du Gouvernement italien, ouvrira peut-être la voie à une solution au sujet de laquelle le Président du Conseil, Ministre des Affaires étrangères, aura soin de se concerter avec le Gouvernement britannique, ainsi qu'avec le Gouvernement espagnol.

Paris, le 17 *janvier* 1926.

[W 766/76/28] No. 25.

Sir R. Graham to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received February 1.)

(No. 99.)

Rome, January 29, 1926.

Sir,

WITH reference to your despatch No. 4248 of the 29th ultimo to His Majesty's Ambassador in Paris, I have the honour to report that the Secretary-General to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, in conversation yesterday, after expressing his warm satisfaction on the settlement of the Italian debt, added that there were other questions which he would like to see out of the way. One of them was that regarding the Tangier Convention, and he must confess that the Italian Government were puzzled on the subject. They had requested their Ambassadors in Paris and London to find out how the land lay. The Marquis della Torretta had told them that the principal opposition to Italian claims lay in Paris, and that they should address themselves to his colleague in that capital. Baron Romano Avezzana, on the other hand, had said that the opposition lay in London, and that they should refer to the Marquis della Torretta. Senator Contarini declared that Italian claims in the matter were of a mild and anodyne character. All they asked for was some recognition of their special position as a Mediterranean Power in this question, and that they should not be placed on the same footing as Holland and Denmark in regard to it. Surely, he said, some formula could be found to satisfy such moderate aspirations. The conversation then turned to other subjects.

I have, &c.

R. GRAHAM.

[C 1343/446/18] No. 26.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to the Marquess of Crewe (Paris).

(No. 338.)

Foreign Office, February 1, 1926.

My Lord,

THE French Ambassador called upon me this afternoon to welcome me on my return and to gather what information he could as to my interview with M. Briand.

I told him that we had taken no decisions, but we had convinced ourselves that there were no serious obstacles to the continuation of that close co-operation which had existed between us both before and since Locarno.

M. de Fleuriau reminded me that I had spoken about the troops of occupation shortly before leaving England; he had transmitted my observations to Paris, but he thought that events in that sphere had rather stood still owing to the preoccupations of the President of the Council with the internal affairs of France. I replied that my conversation with M. Briand on this point had been most satisfactory. M. Briand had volunteered the assurance that he intended to effect a further considerable reduction in the French army of occupation.

His Excellency then enquired whether anything had been said about China, and on my replying in the negative he observed that there was, indeed, nothing to be said; that the course of recent events in North China had been favourable to us, and there was nothing to be done at present but to mark time and await developments. On his asking what other questions we had discussed, I said that we had touched on most of the problems of the day, including the position in the Balkans and Central Europe, but the point to which I had perhaps attached most importance and on which I had taken the opportunity of speaking not only to M. Briand himself but also to M. Berthelot was that of the relations of our two

countries with Italy in view of Italy's position as a guarantor with Great Britain of the Treaty of Locarno. In this connection I had spoken particularly of the situation at Tangier. If the particular proposals which had emanated from Mr. Clive and which you had transmitted to the Quai d'Orsay did not approve themselves to the French Government, I hoped that they would find some other method of settling this difficulty. I was not wedded to any particular proposals, but I attached the highest importance to a policy of friendly co-operation.

I am, &c.
AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

[W 766/76/28] No. 27.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Sir R. Graham (Rome).

(No. 192. Confidential.)

Foreign Office, February 5, 1926.

Sir,

IN your despatch No. 99 of the 29th January your Excellency reported a conversation which you had had with the Secretary-General of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, in which he touched, among other matters, upon the question of Italy's accession to the Tangier Convention. Senator Contarini, you observed, confessed that the Italian Government were puzzled to know where the opposition to their modest claims lay; on appealing for enlightenment to the Italian Ambassadors in London and Paris, each respectively had referred them to the other.

2. The explanation is to be found in the fact that His Majesty's Government and the French Government do not see eye to eye in regard either to the value of Italy's accession or to the price to be paid for it. This variation was plainly revealed before and during the negotiation of the Tangier Convention. While His Majesty's Government were weighing in the balance the advantages and disadvantages of admitting Italy to the conference, the attitude of the French Government soon showed them that either there would be a conference without Italy or there would be no conference at all. Whenever, during the conference itself, the British delegates suggested some concession to Italy, their French colleagues abandoned all restraint in the violence of their opposition.

3. The reason is not far to seek. As you are aware, the French Government regard Italy as having by treaty renounced all further interest in Morocco in return for a free hand elsewhere. They have faithfully adhered to their part of the bargain, and, not unreasonably, they are determined that the Italian Government shall be equally scrupulous. They can hardly be expected, therefore, to acknowledge Signor Mussolini's claim that the whole position has been altered by the war and that, notwithstanding any treaties, Italy is entitled, as a great Mediterranean Power, to take part on an equal footing in the solution of any Moroccan problem.

4. It is this which remains at the bottom of the French Government's intransigence towards what Signor Contarini described, somewhat disingenuously, as Italy's modest aspirations. It explains their constant anxiety lest His Majesty's Government should make some advance to the Italian Government independently, and their insistence that negotiations, if any there are to be, should be conducted in Paris. Lastly, to return to the starting-point of this despatch, it suggests the answer to the puzzle which has been exercising the mind of the Italian Government. It was in good faith to their co-signatories of the Tangier Convention that the recent proposals of His Majesty's Government were submitted in the first instance to the French and Spanish Governments before anything was said at Rome. The Marquis della Torretta, however, has no doubt realised from his conversations at the Foreign Office that the principal obstacle to the Italian claims lies in Paris; indeed, the Italian Government must long have been aware of it and of the reason for it. On the other hand, the Quai d'Orsay may well have allowed it to be inferred, for obvious reasons, that the difficulty was to be sought elsewhere.

5. As you will see from the Marquess of Crewe's despatch No. 116, the negotiations with Italy will be conducted in the first place in Paris, and the French Government are even now expecting to receive proposals from Rome His Majesty's Government must for the moment await the result of these preliminary discussions, but I took occasion to refer to this matter in conversation with M. Briand when in Paris last week and to express again my interest in and hope for an early solution, and this

on two grounds: first, our interest in securing the smoother working of the Tangier Statute, and second, our strong desire for cordial relations and close co-operation between Great Britain, France and Italy.

6. I shall be glad if you will take advantage of any opportunity of urging the Italian Government, in their own no less than the general interest, to keep their demands within such dimensions as may facilitate their acceptance. It would almost seem from hints let fall in Paris that some satisfaction given to France on other matters that have been under discussion between the two Governments might secure without great difficulty an arrangement in regard to Tangier, but I am not informed as to what those matters are.

I am, &c.
AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

[W 1347/76/28] No. 28.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to the Marquess of Crewe (Paris).

(No. 583.)

Foreign Office, February 23, 1926.

My Lord,

A VACANCY is about to occur in the Mixed Court at Tangier, from which one of the British judges is resigning, and it occurred to me that the offer of this judgeship to the Italian Government might promote the efforts which His Majesty's Government are making to secure the accession of Italy to the Tangier Convention. Before proceeding to give effect to this idea I desired to discuss it with the French Government in the hope that they would be animated by a similar spirit of conciliation which would induce them to communicate proposals with the same purpose in view. I therefore requested the French Ambassador to call at the Foreign Office and see Sir W. Tyrrell.

2. Sir William observed to M. de Fleuriau that the idea underlying the suggested surrender of the judgeship was our conviction that, though our interest was great, French interest in coming to a settlement with Italy was greater still, not only in Tangier, but also in view of the fact that Italy was a guarantor of the Locarno treaties. After my recent conversation with M. Briand in Paris, I had returned here with the clear impression that the latter was very anxious to promote a general agreement between France and Italy, thus giving fresh expression to the Locarno policy. This was to apply not merely to Morocco but also to other outstanding questions between the two countries, including the Balkans. Since my return, however, no visible progress had been made in Tangier, while, as to the Balkans, I had been frankly puzzled by the recent communication from his Excellency, both with regard to the proposed pact between France, Italy and Jugoslavia and the Salonica Railway. The idea of the tripartite pact did not appear to appeal to M. Mussolini; as regards the railway, the French Government were favouring a proposal which did not appeal to Greece, whilst His Majesty's Government had put forward a suggestion which did not seem to appeal to Jugoslavia. A deadlock therefore seemed to have arisen, no progress was being made, and His Majesty's Government were at a loss to understand for what the French Government were waiting. The vacancy which had now arisen in the Tangier court seemed to afford a chance for restarting negotiations, and it would be kept open pending a reply from the French Government. Unless, however, proof were forthcoming that the French Government intended to tackle seriously the question of inducing Italy to accede to the convention, the vacancy would be filled entirely on its merits and irrespective of any other consideration.

3. On my instructions, Sir William suggested to the Ambassador that he himself might accelerate the resumption of negotiations by going over to Paris and explaining personally to M. Briand my frame of mind and my keen desire for some move in the direction of a general settlement with Italy which M. Briand had declared he was so determined to promote. His Excellency warmly welcomed this suggestion and said he would go to Paris on the 26th February, returning on the 1st March. He expressed regret that he was unable to start before the 26th as there were several matters requiring his attention which made an earlier departure impossible.

I am, &c.
AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

[W 1540/76/28] No. 29.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to the Marquess of Crewe (Paris).

(No. 619.) *Foreign Office, February 25, 1926.*

My Lord,

M. DE FLEURIAU called upon me this afternoon.

He referred in the first instance to the conversation which Sir William Tyrrell had had with him a few days ago at my request. He told me that he was leaving for Paris to-morrow, and that in the meantime he had communicated to his Government my offer to place the vacant British judgeship at Tangier at the disposal of Italy, if in that way and by such concessions as France might be ready to make Italy's adhesion to the statute could be obtained. He went on to repeat the broad outline of the statement which Sir William Tyrrell had made to him, and enquired whether he himself had rightly understood my position. I replied in the affirmative. I said that my principal desire was to maintain the very cordial and friendly relations now established between the French and British Governments, to cultivate similar friendship and cordiality with the Italian Government, and to see the triangle completed by a like cordial relationship between Paris and Rome. I could not help feeling that at present the Cabinets of Paris and Rome were not altogether at one. He would remember that he had spoken to me about a proposal made by M. Briand to Rome for a defensive treaty embracing France, Italy and Jugoslavia, and I had gathered from what M. de Fleuriau had said that the French Government thought that their proposal was likely to prove acceptable to M. Mussolini. M. de Fleuriau would remember that I had enquired whether this treaty really followed the Locarno Treaty in being a treaty of mutual guarantee among the States between whom quarrels might arise, or whether it followed the older type of defensive alliance directed against aggression by some external Power. He had not been able to answer my question, but from such information as had reached me from Rome, I gathered that it was rather of the latter kind, and I was led to doubt whether M. Briand had rightly gauged the probable attitude of the Italian Government towards it. Then again there was the question of the notes exchanged between the British and Italian Governments in regard to Abyssinia. I had just been reading the telegram from your Lordship in which you give an account of your conversation with M. Ponsot. I told M. de Fleuriau that it seemed to me that the French and Italian Governments were each waiting for the other, and that for want of a frank explanation they were drifting apart rather than coming together. All this caused me a certain anxiety, and it was this which had led me to ask Sir William Tyrrell to make his communication.

M. de Fleuriau then read to me a communication from M. Briand in reference to the agreement just made by M. de Jouvenel at Angora. M. Briand had desired him to tell me that the French Government had not yet received the full text, and that in any case the treaty had been initialled *ad referendum* only. The French Government would not sign any treaty which jeopardised the present *Entente* with this country or caused our policies to diverge. I thanked M. de Fleuriau for the communication. I told him that I should be very grateful for details if and when the French Government were willing to supply me with them, not because I for a moment suspected that there would be anything injurious to us in their policy, but because whatever agreement they might have made might perhaps suggest to us ways in which we too might successfully approach the Turkish Government in the negotiations which we were about to undertake.

M. de Fleuriau referred to the controversy about the composition of the Council. He told me that he had reported to M. Briand what I had previously said to him on the subject, but had received no further instructions, though he knew that conversations had been taking place in Berlin between the French Ambassador and the German Government. He added that, after my speech to the Foreign Press Association, he had written to M. Briand that my object appeared to be to reserve the largest liberty possible for the representatives of the different countries when they met at Geneva, and he added that I should have observed that M. Briand had taken a similar line before the Senate's Foreign Affairs Committee.

Before the Ambassador left, I referred to his note of the 18th February, enquiring what answer His Majesty's Government intended to return to the communication of the Sultan of Nejd, and read to him the substance of our instructions to Mr. Jordan (telegram No. 25 of 25th February).

I am, &c.
AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

[W 1714/76/28] No. 30.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to the Marquess of Crewe (Paris).

(No. 696.) *Foreign Office, March 3, 1926.*

My Lord,

THE French Ambassador called on Sir W. Tyrrell yesterday on his return from his visit to Paris, where he had seen both M. Briand and M. Berthelot and had conveyed to the former the messages which I had entrusted to him last week.

2. As regards Morocco, M. de Fleuriau had mentioned to M. Ponsot, the head of the African Department at the Quai d'Orsay, the English offer to place at the disposal of Italy the vacancy on the bench of Tangier judges. M. Ponsot had remarked that such an offer would undoubtedly persuade Italy to come into the Tangier Convention, and he enquired whether he would be allowed to make use of the offer in the negotiations with Italy.

3. On learning from M. de Fleuriau that the French Government were still waiting for an answer from the Italian Government to a French memorandum of some months' standing, Sir William said that the first thing for the French Foreign Office to do was to press for an answer to their memorandum and to make use of our offer in the course of the ensuing conversations which would be opened up by the French pressing the Italians for a reply.

4. M. de Fleuriau said that he had mentioned Italy to M. Briand, who had declared that he was satisfied on the whole with his present relations with Italy, but M. de Fleuriau said that he would touch upon this question with the Secretary of State in his interview to-morrow.

5. He also proposed to refer to the French treaty with Serbia, the origin of which, M. Berthelot assured him, was traceable to the days of M. Poincaré, who was making treaties of alliance all round the continent. The impression that M. de Fleuriau had carried away from his conversations on the subject in Paris was that his Government had fallen a victim to the pressure both of Serbia and Roumania, who had put themselves up to auction between Paris and Rome. Sir William suggested to the Ambassador that the treaty Italy proposed to make with Serbia differed absolutely in character from the treaty France proposed to Serbia. M. de Fleuriau said that M. Briand would be posted on this subject so that he might be able to discuss it with me at Geneva, and he had also suggested that M. Fromageot should be furnished with the texts of the treaties for communication to Sir Cecil Hurst on the same occasion.

6. M. de Fleuriau ended his conversation by mentioning that M. Berthelot had informed him that the Germans had approached M. Briand with a suggestion to meet him informally previous to the Council meeting at Geneva, but that no date had yet been fixed owing to the uncertainty of M. Briand's movements, who at present had decided to go by the same train to Geneva as I proposed to take at the end of the week.

I am, &c.
AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

[C 2803/1618/62] No. 31.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to the Marquess of Crewe (Paris).

(No. 713.)
(Extract.) *Foreign Office, March 3, 1926.*

THE French Ambassador called to-day to give me an account of his conversations during his visit to Paris. As he had already spoken to Sir William Tyrrell about the Tangier situation, he would only say in regard to that question that he thought the offer of the British Government to place one of the British judgeships at the disposal of Italy if thereby a settlement could be reached did afford the means of bringing Italy in and that question should not now be difficult to handle.

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[W 2974/76/28] No. 32.

The Marquess of Crewe to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(*Received April* 10.)

(No. 651.) *Paris, April* 9, 1926.

Sir,

WITH reference to your despatch No. 1009 of the 30th March, I have the honour to inform you that a member of my staff this morning saw M. Ponsot, Sous-Directeur d'Afrique, at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, in regard to the question of the vacant judgeship at Tangier.

2. M. Ponsot was asked what was the present position of the Franco-Italian negotiations respecting Tangier, and what progress these negotiations had made since the interview between M. Laroche and the counsellor of the Italian Embassy on the 14th January, which is referred to in the Ministry's memorandum enclosed in my despatch No. 116 of the 19th January.

3. M. Ponsot said that, contrary to the expectations of the French Government, these negotiations had made no progress since the counsellor of the Italian Embassy had visited the Quai d'Orsay on the 14th January. No member of the Italian Embassy had since referred to these negotiations, and that was why no further communication had been made to His Majesty's Government with regard to them.

4 M. Ponsot then drew attention to his interview with the Italian counsellor on the 31st March on the question of the concession in Abyssinia, a report of which is contained in my telegram No. 151 of to-day. He said that the Ministry for Foreign Affairs had no doubt but that the Italian Government was deliberately postponing ratification of the Tangier Statute in order to use that ratification as a means of securing concessions from the French Government in other spheres.

5. A proposal like that recently made by Mr. Clive would not therefore really help matters *vis-à-vis* Italy, and it would be exceedingly dangerous *vis-à-vis* Spain, which was waging a campaign in favour of the attribution of Tangier to the Spanish zone. The organisation on the 15th April of the Spanish customs on the Tangier frontier of the Spanish zone was significant in this respect, and the French Government, with the Riff question al-o open, could do nothing at the moment which might give Spain the opportunity of reopening the question of the status of Tangier. The Italian Government was well aware of all this.

6. As regards the judgeship, as the Italian Government had taken no further step with regard to the Tangier negotiations, and as in respect of Abyssinia, the Italian Government was obviously waiting to open general negotiations, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs did not feel that it was politic for it to take the initiative *vis-à-vis* the Italians. The Ministry would, however, M. Ponsot thought, be very grateful if His Majesty's Government would offer the vacant judgeship to Italy, and M. Ponsot even thought any other post which might be open. M. Ponsot presumed that His Majesty's Government would make the essential condition of such an offer Italian ratification of the statute. Even if this proposal were not agreeable to the Italians, M. Ponsot thought that it might have the advantage of compelling them to state what their position as regards the statute was.

7. If, therefore, there be no objection from your point of view, I think that the French Government would be very grateful if you could proceed accordingly.

I have, &c.

CREWE.

[W 2974/76/28] No. 33.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Sir R. Graham (*Rome*).

(No. 611.) *Foreign Office, April* 26, 1926.

Sir,

MY despatch No. 1905 of the 14th December last will have informed your Excellency of the importance which His Majesty's Government attach to the early accession of Italy to the Tangier Convention, and of the reasons which led them to make the suggestion in Paris that you should be instructed to ascertain how the Italian Government would receive an invitation for their representative in Tangier to participate in a discussion of certain amendments of the Statute.

2. For reasons with which you are familiar (see my despatch No. 193 of the 6th February last), the French Government saw fit to discountenance this course, and preferred to rely on negotiations which they understood that the Italian Government, informed from Tangier of my proposals, were about to initiate in Paris. His Majesty's Government would be kept informed of the progress of the discussions which, it was hoped, might pave the way to a final settlement after consultation between the three Governments signatories of the convention.

3. In the face of this situation His Majesty's Government had no alternative but to hold their hand, and to rest their hopes on the outcome of the Franco-Italian conversations. As an earnest of their goodwill, and in the hope of inspiring the French Government with a similar spirit of conciliation, they subsequently volunteered to place one of the British judgeships on the Mixed Tribunal in Tangier at the disposal of the Italian Government, and authorised the French Government to make use of this offer if they thought it would grease the wheels of their negotiations.

4. Unfortunately the hope that something would emerge from the expected Italian move has been falsified. It appears, in fact, that no discussions of any kind have taken place in Paris (see Lord Crewe's despatch No. 651 of the 9th instant); and the French Government, disinclined to take the initiative themselves, now invite His Majesty's Government to try their own hand in Rome. At the same time they emphasise their wish that there should be no mention of modifying the Statute; any suggestion of the sort, they claim, would embarrass them *vis-à-vis* Italy in other directions, and would afford a dangerous pretext to the Spanish Government in the campaign which they are at this moment conducting for a revision of the international régime in their favour. This latter reason is one which cannot but appeal to His Majesty's Government at a time when they are themselves remonstrating with the Spanish Government on this very score (see my despatch to Sir H. Rumbold, No. 176, of the 14th instant).

5. In the circumstances, therefore, there is no inducement that can be held out to the Italian Government beyond the offer of one of the British judgeships. This is an entirely different matter from the scheme propounded to the French Government in December, and, while the Quai d'Orsay profess to think it will be sufficient, I am not myself equally sanguine. On the other hand, the matter cannot be allowed to drift indefinitely, and it will at least be a step forward if some indication can be elicited of the present nature of the Italian conditions; it is the uncertainty in this regard, which, since the rejection of their original extravagant demands, has prevented any advance from the present unsatisfactory position.

6. I would, therefore, wish you to avail yourself of the first favourable opportunity to revèrt once again to the Tangier question in conversation with Signor Mussolini. You should first draw his attention to the campaign which is being waged in the Spanish press to prove that the Statute has failed and that the time is approaching for the incorporation of Tangier in the Spanish zone. The realisation of this dream, Signor Mussolini will admit, would be no less inimical to Italian than to British interests. Whilst in no circumstances can His Majesty's Government acquiesce in the termination of the international régime, these attempts to undermine it may lead to complications which it is in everyone's interest to avoid. Italy's accession to the convention would be the surest way of putting an end to them, and of convincing the Spanish Government, as nothing else could, of the expediency of abandoning their dangerous ambitions.

7. The immediate gain to Tangier would be reflected over a much wider sphere, for the matter is of more than local concern. I am more than ever convinced that the march of peaceful progress in Europe depends upon the close co-operation of the three great continental Powers who stood together to defend it from destruction, and whose solidarity, so recently reaffirmed at Locarno, remains potentially the greatest force for peace in Europe to-day. If he will follow me for a moment in these thoughts, Signor Mussolini will understand why I deplore the least cause of disharmony in the relations between any of the three Governments, and why I am so anxious to see the Tangier question settled to their mutual satisfaction and benefit. On his side, he may rely upon me to appreciate his difficulties and to smooth his path to the best of my ability.

8. In speaking to him in the above sense, your Excellency will do well to feel your way and to avoid giving him occasion to formulate exorbitant conditions from which it might be difficult for him later to recede. If need be, you will remind him that when you last discussed this question, he assured you that his demands would be modest. Finally, at the appropriate moment you may intimate that one of the

British judgeships is immediately available, though it cannot, of course, be left vacant indefinitely.

9. If you think that, in the first flush of his triumphal return from Tripoli, Signor Mussolini is in no need to listen to counsels of this description, you may stay your hand for a while. It may be, on the contrary, that he will feel with me that an arrangement in regard to Tangier would provide a fitting sequel to his colonial tour. You will be the best judge of that. In any event the delay should only be of short duration; the question is one which cannot remain much longer in suspense.

I am, &c.
AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

[W 4268/76/28] No. 34.

Sir R. Graham to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received May 17.)

(No. 389.)
Sir, *Rome, May 13, 1926.*

IN accordance with the instructions contained in your despatch No. 611 of the 26th ultimo, I took the opportunity of a conversation with Signor Mussolini last night to recur to the question of the early accession of Italy to the Tangier Convention. I spoke in the terms of your despatch under reference, and read to his Excellency paragraphs 6 and 7.

2. Signor Mussolini said that he greatly appreciated both the spirit and tone of this communication. It was the case that no fresh proposals on the subject had reached him from French sources. A telegram from the Italian Chargé d'Affaires at Paris had led him to believe that the French Ambassador in Rome was about to offer some suggestion, but nothing had happened. He was in entire agreement with you as regards the Spanish aspiration to incorporate Tangier in the Spanish zone, and he could not entertain such an idea. He would be glad to consider and let me know what conditions the Italian Government would attach to their accession to the convention. Their demands on the subject had always been of a modest character. But he did not hold to any particular conditions so much as to the necessity of some satisfaction being given to Italian prestige. Surely this was not too much to ask? I replied that both his Excellency and Senator Contarini had already assured me that Italian conditions would be reasonable and modest. I feared that the conditions hitherto advanced could not be regarded in that light. I therefore begged his Excellency to consider the whole question afresh and to endeavour to reduce his demands within the most modest limits possible. If he did this he could certainly count on British sympathy and our support of such demands as we were able to accept. I could foreshadow privately that as an earnest of our goodwill we might be ready to cede one of the British judgeships, now vacant, to an Italian. His Excellency would recognise that this would be a considerable concession, and would give the satisfaction to Italian prestige on which he insisted. Signor Mussolini did not appear impressed by the adequacy of this concession, but repeated that he would examine the whole question and let me have an answer shortly. He has since telephoned to me requesting that I should give him the substance of my communication in the form of an *aide-mémoire*. Although I can say that the spirit in which his Excellency received my communication could not have been more friendly, I do not feel too sanguine that the conditions which the Italian Government will eventually put forward are likely to be so modest and reasonable as he asserts.

3. I should add that in replying to my remarks, which I originated in the form of an enquiry as to whether any fresh French proposals regarding Tangier had reached the Italian Government, his Excellency spoke in a tone of personal bitterness regarding the French Government, which was rather disquieting. He said that all his negotiations with His Majesty's Government seemed to bear fruit, and he cited Jubaland, Jaghbub, Abyssinia, &c., whereas with the French he could make no headway whatever. They were altogether too grasping. Even such an important question as that of the status of Italians in Tunis hung on a hand-to-mouth arrangement renewable every three months. Whatever are the rights and wrongs in Franco-Italian relations—and I have no doubt that the Italians have shown themselves quite as unreasonable as the French in the various questions at issue—it seems to me that on the grounds of higher policy it would be well worth some

special French effort to remove the personally bitter feeling on the subject which Signor Mussolini evidently entertains.

I have, &c.
R. GRAHAM.

[W 4468/76/28] No. 35.

Sir R. Graham to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received May 23.)

(No. 119.)
(Telegraphic.) *Rome, May 22, 1926.*

MY despatch No. 389.

Secretary-General told me yesterday that question was being carefully considered and I should shortly receive reply. Italian Government did not attach value to any particular concessions, but only to question of prestige. They would be quite satisfied if some formula could be found for their accession to Tangier Convention which would make it clear that, although Italy might not be on same footing as the three Powers chiefly interested, she had, nevertheless, as a great Mediterranean Power a special position in the question superior to that of Greece or Holland or other small States concerned.

[W 4766/76/28] No. 36.

Sir R. Graham to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received May 30.)

(No. 127.)
(Telegraphic.) *Rome, May 30, 1926.*

MY telegram No. 119.

I asked the Secretary-General yesterday when I might expect some answer. He replied that, as the Franco-Spanish military success in Riff might create a new situation and lead to Morocco question being again raised in all its aspects, Italian Government would prefer to withhold their reply for the moment. The Secretary-General referred to some recent articles in the British press, reproduced here, which seemed to hinder fresh Morocco conference, and asked me whether I thought they had any particular significance. I replied that my impression was to the contrary.

[W 4766/76/28] No. 37.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Sir R. Graham (Rome).

(No. 796.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 5, 1926.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 127 of the 30th ultimo, and I am disappointed to learn therefrom that the Italian Government prefer to withhold for the moment their reply on the question of Italian accession to the Tangier Convention. Extracts from the Italian press which have appeared in the British press combine with the reply of the Secretary-General to your enquiry to make me fear that the Italian Government contemplate putting forward exaggerated pretensions which will render my desire to help of no avail.

I am, &c.
AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

[W 5376/76/28] No. 38.

Sir R. Graham to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received June 14.)

(No. 477.)
Sir, *Rome, June 11, 1926.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 796 of the 5th instant and since writing my despatch No. 467 of to-day's date, I had an opportunity this afternoon of mentioning the question of Italian accession to the Tangier Convention to the Secretary-General to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. I told Count Bordonaro of

your disappointment over the Italian Government preferring to withhold for the moment their reply to my enquiries in the matter. His Majesty's Government had desired to be as helpful as possible, and Signor Mussolini himself had expressed his appreciation of the friendly terms in which my enquiries were couched. It seemed to me regrettable that the Italian Government should not seize this opportunity of informing us as to their real desires.

2. Count Bordonaro said that the Italian Government had only withheld their answer because they thought it possible that the whole question of Morocco might have to be raised at a fresh conference. He asked me whether I considered that such a conference was probable. I replied in the negative, drawing his attention to the recent answer given to a parliamentary question in the House of Commons on the subject. I thought it certain that the French Government would do everything that lay within their power to avoid such a conference. Count Bordonaro agreed, but added that perhaps the Spanish Government might not see matters in the same light. However, both Signor Mussolini and he himself were inclined to the belief that a conference was unlikely. He would, therefore, reconsider the matter and see whether it would not be possible to give me an answer to my enquiries. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs had been considering the question since I approached them in the matter and had the materials for their answer ready.

I have, &c.
R. GRAHAM.

[W 5919/76/28] No. 39.

Sir R. Graham to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(*Received June* 28.)

(No. 515.)
Rome, June 23, 1926.

Sir,

AS reported in my telegram No. 150 of to-day's date, the Prime Minister requested me to call upon him this morning, and handed to me a confidential memorandum enumerating the concessions which Italy desired to obtain in return for her accession to the Tangier Convention. Signor Mussolini requested me to consider this communication as verbal, that is to say, of the same nature as the enquiry which I had addressed to him on the 12th May.

2. I asked his Excellency to be good enough to enumerate to me the conditions which the Italian Government attached to their accession, and he read to me the nine points specified towards the end of the memorandum herewith enclosed. I said that I was frankly disappointed with this result of my enquiry. Some of the conditions were old friends, others appeared to be new ones, and I did not see how any progress could be hoped for on such lines. Signor Mussolini replied that you had wished to know what concessions the Italian Government desired to receive. The points now enumerated were not conditions but only desiderata suitable for discussion between our two Governments. They were most of them of trifling character, and his Excellency did not insist upon all or any of them in particular, but in view of the important Italian interests in the Tangier zone, where there were from 10,000 to 12,000 Italians, he considered that we ought to be able to meet him at least on some of them. In any case, the Italian attitude would depend upon the reception accorded to his proposals. I enquired which were the points to which he attached most importance, and after looking at them again, he replied: Nos. 3 and 9, especially the latter, which might give employment to a certain number of Italian workmen.

3. My impression was that Signor Mussolini was not thoroughly conversant with the question, and that the memorandum had been prepared for him by the Ministry. This is scarcely surprising in view of the overwhelming character of the duties assumed by his Excellency, which render it increasingly difficult for him to keep himself fully informed on problems of foreign affairs.

4. The Italian pretensions are clearly stated in the enclosed memorandum, and I have little to add except to say that I do not think they need be taken too literally. The Italian Government would probably be satisfied if two or three of them could be contented. I should say that the most important point in their eyes is enhanced prestige by the recognition, in some form or other, of Italy's special position as a great Mediterranean Power in relation with the Tangier question.

I have, &c.
R. GRAHAM.

Enclosure in No. 39.

Aide-mémoire *received from the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs.*

(Translation.)
(Confidential.)

THE Royal Government have received with pleasure the communication made to them by His Britannic Majesty's Ambassador on the 15th May last, and have taken note of the friendly intentions by which the British Government show themselves to be inspired in seeking to find a way of making it possible for Italy to accede to the Statute of Tangier, while fully safeguarding her legitimate rights and interests.

It is known that the Italian Government, so early as 1920, when information first reached Italy of the British Government's intention of resuming with the Governments of Paris and Madrid the negotiations for the Tangier Statute, which had been interrupted in 1914, took steps with the Government of London in order to participate in the negotiations, and, in their note of the 26th October, 1923 [*sic:* ?25th October, 1923], addressed to the British, French and Spanish Governments, formally asked that an Italian representative should take part in the Conference of Paris. That note contained the following textual declaration:—

> "The Italian Government claims that Italy, as a great Mediterranean Power and a signatory of the Act of Algeciras, cannot be excluded from the conference which is to open at Paris on the 22nd instant. Her exclusion would prejudice her rights and her legitimate interests. It would, moreover, leave the Italian Government perfectly free to decline to accept any conclusions which may be reached by the three States participating in the approaching conference. The Italian Government make the fullest reservations in the matter, with the view especially of safeguarding their future liberty of action."

The Italian request gave rise to a diplomatic correspondence, which resulted in the refusal of the three Powers to admit Italy into the conference, so that it only remained for the Royal Government to renew, in their note of the 25th December, 1923, the full reservations previously formulated.

Since, however, in the note which the British Government had addressed to the Italian Ambassador in London on the 8th December, 1923, the declaration was made that the Italian Government need not fear that her legitimate interests would be prejudiced by the Paris Conference, the results of which, in the event of an agreement being reached, would be communicated to them in due course, the Royal Government remained in the expectation of being informed of these results, and refrained from prolonging a polemical discussion, in which, as a matter of fact, they claimed, as they still claim, to have irrefutably proved the existence of well-founded Italian rights.

It is well, however, to establish clearly that the interests claimed by Italy in the Tangier question are twofold. On the one side are those arising from the special situation of Italy as a Mediterranean Power, on the other those which Italy possesses locally in the Tangier zone of Morocco. In view of these extensive interests, Italy considers that she cannot be regarded, so far as concerns the Tangier question, as being on the same level as the other States signatory to the Act of Algeciras.

Nor would this be possible on the other hand, even if it were desired to consider only the local Italian interests in the Tangier zone, since, although admitting that the total of such interests is proportionately less than those of Great Britain, France and Spain, it must be recognised that they are far superior to those possessed at Tangier by the other States signatory of the Act of Algeciras.

If the Governments which took part in the Conference of Paris had recognised this special situation of Italy, there would logically have been no difficulty in the participation of Italy in that conference, and the Royal Government would have examined, together with the other Governments, the extent of the local Italian interests at Tangier, in connection with Italy's Mediterranean situation, and very probably a satisfactory agreement could have been reached, which would have eliminated the present difficulties and finally solved the question.

But since the three Governments did not accede to the formal request of Italy to participate in the conference, the Royal Government, on the basis of the assurances

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given them in the above-mentioned note of the 8th December, 1923, expected that this recognition (of their position) would be indirectly and practically secured by the Conference of Paris, by means of provisions safeguarding not only the local interests of Italy in the Tangier zone, but also her general Mediterranean interests.

As the result of a detailed and exhaustive examination of the Convention of Paris, the Royal Government were, however, obliged, to their regret, to conclude that there had as a matter of fact not been, on the part of the three signatory Governments, that understanding of Italian interests on which the Royal Government had relied.

The Royal Government, however, being desirous of assisting in the final settlement of the Mediterranean situation, and with the object of showing that their attitude is one of conciliation and devoted to securing a final solution of this important and delicate question, have made every effort to reduce their objections and requests to the indispensable minimum for guaranteeing their interests.

The Italian Government would consequently be prepared to accede to the Paris Convention of the 18th December, 1923, as it now stands, on condition that the three signatory Governments first of all recognise explicitly that her quality of an essentially Mediterranean Great Power confers upon Italy the right to special consideration as regards the organisation of the Tangier zone of Morocco from the international point of view no less than as regards the administration of that zone.

Depending on such recognition, which, moreover, would be nothing else than recognising the incontestable and obvious geographical and political facts, the Royal Government ask the British, French and Spanish Governments, signatories of the Paris Convention of the 18th December, 1923, that they may be given the following assurances :—

1. That an Italian officer may be appointed to Tangier with the duty of informing the Royal Government on the observation of the obligations of a military character contained in article 3 of the convention and relative to the neutrality régime of the Tangier zone.
2. That the surveillance of the contraband traffic in arms and munitions of war in the territorial waters of the Tangier zone may be exercised by Italian as well as by British, Spanish and French naval forces.
3. That, in consideration of the number and importance of the Italian colony at Tangier, which is in course of continual growth and development, the International Legislative Assembly be invited to elect from its members a vice-president of Italian nationality, authorised, like the British and Spanish vice-presidents, to assist the Mendub in the presidency of the assembly, and to act for him in case of absence or inability.
4. That a permanent post for an Italian judge of the Mixed Tribunal at Tangier should be established.
5. That one of the three posts of secretary-registrar (segretario cancelliere) contemplated in article 14 of the draft dahir for the administration of justice should be assigned to an Italian citizen.
6. That the codes and texts dealing with regulations and financial questions drawn up by the British, Spanish and French Technical Commissions be submitted to the examination of the Italian Government.

   Should the Italian Government feel obliged to propose any modification in the texts already approved by the three Governments, such proposals should be studied and taken into consideration with a view to a revision of such texts, which might be effected at the expiration of the first period of three years from the entry into operation of the statute.
7. That by means of suitable arrangements to be studied in agreement with the Italian Government, means should be found to make possible the protection of Italian interests in the fixing of customs valuations.

   The Royal Government would not be unwilling, for example, to suggest a formula by which the proposals of the Customs Commission on the subject of tariffs should be submitted to the Committee of Control, whose consent would be indispensable for the application of such proposals.

   The decisions of the Committee of Control should be taken by a majority vote, so that the Italian consul, as a member of the committee, should be able to discuss and take decisions on the subject for the protection of Italian interests.

8. That the Italian Government may appoint as their representatives in the Tangier zone officials of the regular diplomatic service in the capacity of consuls-general.
9. That a fair and proportionate participation of Italian capital and labour may be assured, in the most suitable way, as regards the company to which the construction of the port of Tangier has been entrusted, and as regards the company which operates that port.

In conclusion, if the three Governments signatory of the Convention of Paris are disposed explicitly to recognise the special situation of Italy as regards the organisation of the Tangier zone, on the basis of her position as an essentially Mediterranean Great Power, and if, consequently, the aforesaid three Governments are disposed to give to Italy substantially the assurances indicated above, the Royal Government does not doubt that, by means of friendly collaboration of the technical organs of the three Governments with those of Italy, it will be possible to find the most suitable formulæ for the purpose of harmonising the Italian requests with the provisions of the Paris Convention.

The recent events in the Riff, however, concluded by the surrender of Abd-el-Krim, have drawn the attention of the Italian Government to the possibility of changes in the present situation of Morocco, and consequently, as it is in the interest both of Italy and Great Britain that that situation should not be prejudiced in any way, and that a lasting settlement of the Moroccan question should be reached —this being an indispensable element in the general movement towards peace—the Italian Government would be glad to learn the opinion of the British Government on the subject, bearing in mind the right of Italy, as a signatory of the Act of Algeciras, to take part in any decision which may modify the situation established by that Act.

Rome, June 1926.

(c.) Accession of Portugal to the Tangier Statute.

[**W 633/76/28**] No. 40.

Sir L. Carnegie to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received January 27.)

(No. 12.)

Sir, *Lisbon, January* 20, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to report that I took the opportunity of an official luncheon. given by Rear-Admiral Kelly to-day on H.M.S. "Curaçoa" to members of the Portuguese Government, to speak to the Minister for Foreign Affairs in the sense of your despatch No. 3 of the 4th instant relative to the accession of Portugal to the Tangier Convention.

2. His Excellency replied that Portugal would not ratify the convention until the French Government had given satisfaction in regard to the naturalisation of the two Moorish families mentioned in my despatch No. 271 of the 9th October, 1924. I was under the impression that this question had been settled and was surprised at its being raised again. I also forgot for the moment that a previous Minister for Foreign Affairs had verbally assured me (please see my despatch referred to above) that this dispute with the French Government would not affect Portugal's adhesion to the Convention.

3. I expressed my regret at his reply, and then pointed out to him the possible consequences of the failure of the Tangier Statute. I concluded by observing that when in difficulties the Portuguese Government constantly claimed the assistance of His Majesty's Government in virtue of the old alliance. His Majesty's Government now, on the same grounds, invoked the aid of the Portuguese Government in this matter.

4. Dr. Vasco Borges held up his hand and said that the mention of the alliance was enough. The convention would be ratified at once. He proceeded to confer with the Prime Minister, and the two then assured me that the necessary Bill would be at once laid before Parliament. I expressed my thanks and said that I felt sure that His

Majesty's Government would be glad to give their good offices towards effecting a settlement of the naturalisation case if asked to do so.

I have, &c.
LANCELOT D. CARNEGIE.

P.S.—Since writing the above I have received a request by telephone from the Minister for Foreign Affairs to address to him a note in the sense of my conversation with him to-day. A copy of my note is enclosed. His Excellency informed me at the same time that the Chamber had already this afternoon ratified the convention and that the approval of the Senate—a mere formality—would be obtained in a day or two.

L. D. C.

Enclosure in No. 40.

Sir L. Carnegie to Portuguese Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Lisbon, January 20, 1926.

Your Excellency,

YOU will recollect that in August last your Excellency expressed regret to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires that the Portuguese Government had not yet found time to consider the Bill providing for the accession of Portugal to the Tangier Convention, and that the matter could not come up until the Chambers met again in session. Some time ago the Portuguese Government declared that they had no objection in principle to this convention, and that all that was required was the ratification of it by Parliament.

His Majesty's Government attach great importance to the accession of Portugal to the convention. As I had the honour of pointing out to your Excellency to-day, if the Statute of Tangier fails, which it will do unless all the signatories of the Act of Algeciras accede shortly, the only alternative will be to transfer control of the zone to a single Power, and the success of the new régime is thus as much to the advantage of Portugal as of Great Britain. The Parliament is now in session and, under the instructions of His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, I have the honour to beg that your Excellency will be so good as to take at your earliest convenience the necessary steps to secure the ratification of the convention.

I would point out to your Excellency that the Portuguese Government when in difficulties not infrequently claim the assistance of His Majesty's Government in virtue of the ancient alliance between Great Britain and Portugal. On this occasion, His Majesty's Government, on the same grounds, invoke the aid of the Portuguese Government in this important question of adhering to the Convention of Tangier.

I avail, &c.
LANCELOT D. CARNEGIE.

[W 1512/76/28] No. 41.

General Norton de Mattos to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(*Received February* 25.)

Portuguese Embassy, London, February 23, 1926.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that a Bill has been passed in the Portuguese Parliament giving power to the Portuguese Government to the effect of adhesion to the Convention regarding the Organisation of the Statute of the Tangier Zone, signed at Paris, the 18th December, 1923, by Great Britain, France and Spain.

Accordingly with that Act of Parliament a Law has been published in the "Diario do Governo" of the 19th February, 1926, and I am charged by my Government to notify His Majesty's Government that the Portuguese Government give their adhesion to the aforesaid convention, and accept the alterations introduced by that convention in the stipulations of the Act of Algeciras.

I have, &c.
NORTON DE MATTOS.

(d.) Spanish Customs Cordon.

[W 2312/76/28] No. 42

Mr. Clive to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(*Received March* 20.)

(No. 55. Confidential.)

Sir,

Tangier, March 14, 1926.

ABOUT ten days ago my Spanish colleague told me what while in principle his Government would have no objection to certain articles of the statute being discussed with a view to modification in accordance with the suggestions I had unofficially made in Madrid last November they could not agree to article 20 of the statute, relating to interzonal customs duties, being made a subject of general discussion. He was authorised to discuss the matter with me and his French colleague, and to that end would shortly send me a memorandum containing the views of the Spanish Government. On the 6th March he sent me a memorandum, of which a copy is enclosed, setting forth those views. In a letter enclosing the memorandum he begged me to study it and let him know what day we could meet to go into the question, as his Government was anxious for an early reply. I sent the memorandum to Mr. Dicken, as Director of Finance for the Tangier zone, and asked for his views on the question. I told him that M. Feit had received a similar memorandum from M. Plá, but I was unaware whether he had yet communicated it to M. Alberge. Unfortunately I have not been able to see my French colleague for some days as I have been laid up as the result of an accident, but I have the honour to enclose a copy of a note by Mr. Dicken commenting on the Spanish proposals. Writing to me on the 12th March, Mr. Dicken says that so far M. Alberge has received no communication on the subject from the French consul-general. I hope, however, this week to be able to see M. Feit and discuss the question with him.

2. You have been made aware in previous despatches that not only I myself but, I believe, the whole commercial community of Tangier consider that the proposals made in article 20 for interzonal customs stations must in the end be disastrous to the trade of Tangier. So far no such stations have been established, as, with the consent of the respective authorities, effect has not yet been given to article 20. In December last a meeting took place in Tangier between the heads of the customs of the French and Spanish zones, with a view to coming to some arrangement on the question. Opportunities were given to the various Chambers of Commerce to express their views. The chairman of the British Chamber was thereby enabled to acquaint these gentlemen with the views of the British Chamber of Commerce. He wrote to me at the time that he gathered that M. Serra, the head of the French customs, favoured an arrangement on the lines of a lump sum being paid at intervals to the Spanish zone, "which, as I knew, was the view of the British Chamber," but that the head of the Spanish customs, while showing every consideration for this point of view, expressed no opinion on the subject. Finally, after considerable discussion between the technical experts, it was proposed that Tangier should for the first year pay a lump sum of 500,000 pesetas (say 2,000,000 fr.), but the head of the Spanish customs was not prepared to do more than refer the matter to his Government. The sum offered was in round figures about 25 per cent. of the net profits of the Tangier customs after payment of all fixed charges. You will observe from M. Plá's memorandum that the Spaniards now suggest that if a lump sum ("somme forfaitaire") is to be agreed to they should not only receive 50 per cent. of the takings of the Tangier customs but will also establish customs stations at the entries to the Spanish zone for checking all goods brought in.

3. Yesterday Mr. Harris came to see me. He told me that the day before he had at M. Plá's request been to call on him and had had a long conversation with him on the subject of interzonal duties and the general Spanish attitude towards Tangier.

4. The gist of M. Plá's remarks, according to Mr. Harris, was as follows :—

The Spanish Government had never liked the Tangier Convention of 1923. They had, however, signed it and would abide by its provisions. Recent events (meaning the Gordon-Canning and Arnall incidents) had, however, made a very bad impression in Spain, and the Spanish Government felt very deeply on the subject of Tangier continuing to be used as a centre of intrigue against their zone. So long as the present

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régime continued they felt that this could not be entirely eradicated. He then referred to General Primo de Rivera's interview with Mr. Harris last November. An account of that interview was forwarded to Mr. Villiers on the 19th November.

Speaking of the interzonal customs duties, M. Plá let drop the following remark: "Under article 20 we can kill Tangier." That has always been my view if the Spaniards insist on maintaining the letter of that article, which, according to M. Plá, they fully intend to do, because the alternatives offered in the Spanish memorandum would appear to be even less favourable to Tangier than observing the strict letter of the statute. Mr. Harris then enquired of M. Plá what solution the Spaniards had in mind if they succeeded in their cheerful desire to kill Tangier economically. M. Plá said they would wish to change Tangier as little as possible. They would leave the Mixed Courts and the International Municipality, but would take over the customs and the policing of the zone, and would be prepared to come to an arrangement with the Port Company for running the port. The existing articles about neutrality would, of course, remain. Tangier would not be included in the Spanish zone, nor would it be under the High Commission in Tetuan; there would be a Spanish administrator responsible direct to Madrid. What the Spaniards had in view was some sort of mandate to administer Tangier. It was not quite clear to Mr. Harris from whom this mandate would derive, but presumably from the French Protectorate with the consent of the signatory Powers of Algeciras. M. Plá emphasised that there would, of course, be no customs barriers between Tangier and the Spanish zone, and under some such arrangement the prospects of the economic prosperity of Tangier would be enormously enhanced.

5. I asked Mr. Harris whether M. Plá had referred to the attitude likely to be adopted by the French in the event of any such proposals ever being put forward, as it was hardly likely that, the status of Tangier having been definitely settled for a period of twelve years, the French would listen to any proposals to change it without some very strong inducement. Mr. Harris said that he had mentioned this point and the former suggestions of Marshal Lyautey for a rectification of the frontier to the west of the mouth of the River Mouloya were referred to. Marshal Lyautey's idea had been to include the "cap de l'eau" in the French zone with a view to building a port that would become the outlet for many of the goods that were now exported from Melilla.

6. Mr. Harris said, however, that M. Plá was very vague on questions of detail, and seemed to be doing nothing more than taking preliminary soundings. He appeared to realise, moreover, that no changes were possible so long as a state of war continued close to our frontier. He had referred to Mr. Harris's recent articles in the "Times" questioning the probability of the present international statute proving a success, and it is perhaps worthy of note that the Madrid newspaper the "Debate," which, I understand, usually reflects the views of General Primo de Rivera, now speaks in the most flattering terms of the "Times" correspondent in Tangier, after abusing him as recently as last autumn as the enemy of Spain and general disturber of the peace. This may help to explain why Mr. Harris, who has for many years past been the *bête noire* of the Spaniards, should be made the confidant of these views, although Mr. Harris had the impression that M. Plá hoped that he would repeat them to me. M. Plá said to him that he had not, of course, said a word and would not say anything on the subject to any of his colleagues. I do not propose to mention what Mr. Harris told me to my French colleague, but it is of considerable interest to have this expression of Spanish opinion coming from the Spanish consul-general, usually a most silent and reserved official, and it will be interesting to see what effect exactly will be given to article 20 of the statute.

I have, &c.
R. H. CLIVE.

Enclosure 1 in No. 42.

Explications sur le Moyen d'Application des divers Systèmes qui peuvent être adoptés pour que la Zone espagnole puisse percevoir les Droits qui lui ont été reconnus par l'Article 20 du Statut de Tanger.

Établissement des Douanes à la Frontière.

Avec ce système, toute marchandise importée non originaire du Maroc, devrait acquitter 10 pour cent. de droits d'importation (sauf celles qui par exception les acquittent en proportion inférieure d'accord à des règlements), ainsi que 2½ pour cent

de taxe spéciale. Les taxes de consommation devraient être acquittées par les marchandises frappées de ces taxes. Toute marchandise sortie de la zone espagnole et affectée, d'après ce qui a été établi, des droits d'exportation, aurait à acquitter ces droits aux mêmes douanes.

Le régime à suivre serait celui en vigueur dans les autres douanes de la zone espagnole, c'est-à-dire, production par l'importateur de la "déclaration d'importation," vérification de la marchandise par le personnel de la douane, sa valoration et acquittement des droits. Les bureaux de douane susmentionnés seraient autorisés à livrer des certificats aux importateurs, à fin que ceux-ci puissent constater que leurs marchandises avaient été destinées à la consommation de la zone espagnole, en vue de la restitution correspondante des droits par la douane de Tanger. D'autre part, la zone espagnole restituerait en outre les droits des marchandises importées par ses douanes qui auraient été destinées à la consommation de Tanger.

En ce qui concerne les droits d'exportation, les marchandises à qui ils sont affectés devraient les acquitter, avec les formalités de déclaration, constatation de la marchandise et paiement; cependant, la zone espagnole admettrait des certificats livrés par les autorités de Tanger, en vue de la restitution des droits acquittés par les marchandises, qui sans sortir réellement de l'Empire auraient été consommées dans ladite zone.

Pour ce qui a trait aux marchandises importées par cabotage, les douanes respectives percevraient les droits de celles qui ne seraient pas originaires du Maroc, ainsi que de celles qui, tout en ayant cette origine, ne seraient pas assujetties aux conditions dans lesquelles le cabotage doit être effectué.

Système de Compensation de Documents.

Ce système exigerait l'existence des mêmes bureaux de douane à la frontière, où il serait convenable qu'un représentant de la zone de Tanger y figurât parmi le personnel espagnol.

Le régime à suivre serait: production de déclarations et constatation de la conformité de celles-ci avec la marchandise. En cas où il y aurait de discordance, la douane serait à même d'obliger à la rectification de la déclaration.

Les marchandises ne seraient retenues que juste le temps indispensable à la remise de la déclaration ainsi qu'à sa constatation.

Pour les marchandises arrivées à Tanger, non originaires du Maroc et provenant de la zone espagnole, le même système serait à suivre.

Quant aux exportations des produits marocains, il serait également indispensable la production de la déclaration en y indiquant si lesdits produits sont destinés à la consommation de Tanger ou à l'exportation définitive. L'administration de la zone espagnole présenterait à la douane de Tanger, dans la première quinzaine de chaque mois, toutes les déclarations d'importation, ainsi que celles des articles affectés de taxes de consommation et celles d'exportation déclarée définitive.

Au vu de ces documents, et après déduction et compensation faite des documents qui constateraient le nombre des marchandises arrivées à Tanger provenant de la zone espagnole, la douane de Tanger serait à même de payer à ladite zone, dans la quinzaine suivante, tous les droits qu'elle aurait perçus.

Système de Quantité proportionnelle du Recouvrement de la Douane de Tanger.

Il devrait être fixé à la zone espagnole une participation du 50 pour cent dans le revenu obtenu par la douane de Tanger sur les importations; une taxe spéciale de 21/22 pour cent; exportation et taxes de consommation du sucre, café, thé, bières, alcools et parfumerie.

Ce taux devrait être en vigueur pendant une période de trois mois, et la somme correspondant au mois précédent serait payée dans la première quinzaine de chaque mois.

Des postes de douane seraient installés dans les lieux que la zone espagnole jugerait convenables et les fonctionnaires espagnols, ainsi que ceux de Tanger, y pourront prendre note de toutes les marchandises importées et exportées, en vue d'établir la statistique, qui à présent n'existe pas. Avec les renseignements ainsi obtenus, et en leur appliquant les valorations faites par la douane de Tanger, on obtiendrait le taux moyen proportionnel correspondant à la zone espagnole et qui serait appliqué dans la période suivante de trois mois.

Les renseignements des trois mois suivants additionnés à ceux de la période précédente devraient être appliqués aux trois mois suivants. On continuerait de cette façon jusqu'à ce que la statistique d'une année aurait été établie, et dont la proportion pourrait être appliquée à l'année écoulée, et fixerait le taux à appliquer dans les années suivantes.

Les avantages d'un tel système seraient que la zone de Tanger aussi bien que la zone espagnole obtiendraient avec une grande approximation l'effectivité de leurs droits, étant assuré pour la douane de Tanger un revenu presque fixe, sans que celle-ci soit à même de payer à la zone espagnole des sommes très élevées et sans que, d'autre part, la zone espagnole soit à même de percevoir des sommes qui, d'ailleurs, pourraient être fort petites par rapport au mouvement commercial à réaliser par ses frontières. Jusqu'à ce que les renseignements statistiques nécessaires soient obtenus, les entraves que le commerce aurait à subir ne seraient, dans la première année, qu'insignifiantes, et celles-ci disparaîtraient absolument dans les années suivantes, avec la suppression de tous les postes de douane, ainsi que de tous les frais de personnel et de surveillance que les deux zones auraient à effectuer avec tout autre système.

Système à Forfait.

De même qu'au système précédent, des postes de douane seraient établis à fin d'obtenir les renseignements statistiques de la somme à payer chaque année.

Lesdits postes douaniers, ainsi que la surveillance qu'ils comportent, devraient être permanents, et ce obligerait aux deux zones de faire également des frais permanents.

Avec ce caractère permanent, les petites entraves, ainsi que les délais imposés au commerce pour prendre les renseignements statistiques nécessaires en vue de fixer la somme à payer chaque année, ne pourraient jamais disparaître.

Avec ce système, la zone espagnole pourrait se trouver à même de payer une somme à forfait inférieure à celle qui lui correspond, comme il arrive avec celle qui lui a été maintenant offerte. D'autre part, la zone de Tanger risquerait de se trouver dans une situation vraiment difficile si la somme à payer chaque année, d'après les résultats de l'année précédente, viendrait à être fixée, une crise commerciale, la diminution des recettes douanières survenue comme conséquence d'une suspension du port, pouvant mettre à même à la zone de Tanger de payer à la zone espagnole la somme convenue qui pourrait représenter la plupart de ses recettes.

Si ce système viendrait à être adopté, il faudrait ajouter à la somme à forfait les droits d'exportation, ainsi que ceux de taxe spéciale qui correspondent de plein droit à la zone espagnole.

Les paiements devraient être effectués à la fin de chaque mois.

Si quelqu'un des systèmes de compensation, aussi bien proportionnel qu'à forfait, viendrait à être adopté, les marchandises en transbordement ou en cabotage seraient régies par ce qui a été fixé dans les articles 4 et 5 du règlement convenu en principe par les représentants des douanes.

Quoique ce soit le système adopté et selon le résultat obtenu dans la première année, la douane de Tanger devra payer à la zone espagnole les sommes que celle-ci aurait dû percevoir depuis le 1er juillet 1925, date de l'entrée en vigueur du statut jusqu'au jour où elle commencera à acquitter ses droits.

Tanger, le 3 mars 1926.

Enclosure 2 in No. 42.

Critique sur la Note espagnole.

1. *Sur la Question de la Taxe spéciale de 2½ pour Cent.*

La note espagnole insiste dans toutes ses sections pour que cette taxe soit incluse dans les arrangements à faire, quel que soit le système adopté.

Or, l'Administration ne peut pas accepter cette thèse.

En principe, la taxe spéciale est destinée à faire face aux travaux publics destinés au développement de la navigation et du commerce en général dans l'Empire chérifien. Cette référence à la navigation vise évidemment le port de débarquement; seulement cette taxe étant *ad valorem*, elle ne peut être perçue si les marchandises sont passées seulement "en transit" sans évaluation, ce qui serait le cas dans le système prévu dans le statut d'une frontière de terre douanière.

Dans le seul cas où cette évaluation était possible, parce que la marchandise, même pour une réexportation ultérieure, paierait le droit de douane au port de Tanger moyennant une ristourne interzonale, c'est-à-dire, les tabacs, ce principe a été admis dans le statut même et le 2½ pour cent reste entièrement acquis à la zone.

L'application de cette idée aux trois systèmes discutés dans la note espagnole, est dans l'exposé ci-après.

2. *Sur la Question des Droits d'Exportation:*

De même la note espagnole insiste dans toutes ses sections pour qu'ils soient pris en compte entre les zones.

Cette thèse aussi est inacceptable, car ces droits ne sont pas dus par le fait du passage d'une zone à l'autre *dans le Maroc*, mais du fait de l'exportation *hors du Maroc*, alors qu'on ne peut pas présumer *d'avance* qu'une marchandise sera exportée, le fait n'étant pas acquis.

Le cas est exactement l'opposé en cas de paiement des droits d'importation à la douane de débarquement et à décider ensuite quelle zone les encaissera, car, dans ces conditions, le fait d'importation est acquis et les marchandises *sont susceptibles d'être taxées.* Ceci n'est pas le cas si on veut faire payer les droits d'exportation en passant de zone à zone sous prétexte que les marchandises *seront* exportées: *elles ne sont pas susceptibles d'être taxées*, le fait d'exportation n'étant pas acquis.

3. *Système Douanes à la Frontière.*

C'est justement le système prévu dans le statut et que nous voulons éviter.

En tout cas, si ce système était mis en pratique tout cet arrangement semble être fondé sur des idées illogiques. Le système de "transit" est prévu dans ce cas, les marchandises pour les autres zones seraient déclarées comme telles et soumises à ce régime et, n'ayant pas payé à Tanger, il n'y aurait rien à *restituer.*

C'est alors que les 2½ pour cent "taxe spéciale" échapperaient à la zone de Tanger, car les marchandises passeraient par Tanger sans être évaluées. S'il n'y avait pas de restitution, il n'y aurait évidemment pas de "documents."

4. "*Système de Quantité proportionnelle du Recouvrement de la Douane de Tanger.*"

Paragraphe 1: "*Devrait être fixé à* 50 *pour cent.*"—Aucune raison ni chiffre quelconque ne sont donnés à l'appui de cette déclaration. Il est inadmissible qu'une pareille déclaration *ex cathedra* soit acceptée. Nous n'acceptons pas ce chiffre et avons toutes les données statistiques nécessaires pour fixer le chiffre réel. Un 50 pour cent arbitrairement fixé de cette manière n'est même pas une base de discussion.

Pour les raisons énoncées, la taxe spéciale n'est pas en question. Les postes de frontière gêneraient sans doute le commerce, mais seraient essentiels pour le système.

5. *Système à Forfait.*

Paragraphe 4.— . . . . "Comme il arrive avec celle qui lui a été maintenant offerte" . . . .

Cette phrase est une simple impertinence et n'est appuyée d'aucun raisonnement. La somme a été fixée après un examen minutieux des statistiques douanières par les représentants des *trois* zones.

Comme il a été déjà expliqué, les taxes de l'exportation et celle de 2½ pour cent ne sont pas en question. Il ne faut donc pas revenir sur cela à chaque moment.

Le dernier paragraphe est tout à fait inacceptable. Le retard incombe entièrement à l'Espagne, qui n'a pas répondu: elle aurait pu établir à son gré ses postes-frontière et en plus les droits de consommation sur les marchandises pour la zone espagnole n'ont pas été perçus par Tanger, les sommes payées en consignation ayant été ristournées sur preuve du paiement en zone espagnole; on ne pourrait certainement pas alors payer le forfait rétroactivement, car ce serait payer à l'Espagne une partie que cette dernière a déjà encaissée.

C. V. DICKEN.

Tanger, le 12 *mars* 1926.

[**W 3355/76/28**] No. 43.

Mr. Clive to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(*Received April* 22.)

(No. 80.)

Sir, *Tangier, April* 16, 1926.

IN my telegram No. 14 of yesterday I had the honour to report that the Spanish authorities had established a customs cordon round the Tangier zone to give effect to

the interpretation which they put on article 20 of the statute, paragraph 2 of which runs as follows :—

> "Goods landed at Tangier and destined for use or consumption in the French or Spanish zones shall enjoy the benefit of the ordinary rules of transit, warehousing or temporary admission, the proper customs duties being collected at the customs houses of the zone of consumption."

I further stated in my telegram that 12½ per cent. duty was being collected on all goods (*i.e.*, 10 per cent. customs duty plus 2½ per cent. special tax). Duty was even being charged on goods of Moroccan origin.

2. A reference to my despatch No. 204 of the 27th June last year will show that this question of interzonal customs duties came to the fore immediately after the statute entered into force on the 1st June. On that occasion, as a result of the action of the Committee of Control, the French authorities suspended the action which they had taken, in virtue of their special position in regard to customs matters, for the collection of duties on goods entering the Tangier zone. It was agreed at the time that the whole question should be gone into by an interzonal customs meeting as soon as possible. As a matter of fact the meeting did not take place until December last, when the Spanish delegate, after considerable discussion, agreed to put forward to his Government a proposal that Tangier should pay in full settlement a round sum of 500,000 pesetas for the first year. No reply was received from the Spanish authorities until the 2nd April, when an undated letter was received by the Administration through the Spanish consul-general from the Spanish High Commission at Tetuan stating that a customs cordon would be established from the 15th April on the ground that the competent authorities of the Spanish zone did not consider the amount offered sufficient. To this letter the Administration replied on the 7th April, pointing out that as the difference between the two Administrations rested not on a question of principle but solely on a question of fact it ought to be possible to arrive at a settlement. At the instance of the French consul-general and the administrator the Spanish consul-general recommended to the High Commission that the Director of Finance of the Spanish zone should come to Tangier to go into the question. This official arrived on the 12th. Long and detailed discussions were held on the 12th and 13th, as a result of which a fair and reasonable agreement was come to, which Señor Valverde agreed to submit to the Spanish High Commission. On the 14th April a letter dated the 10th April was received by the administrator, stating that, without prejudice to any results which might be arrived at from the conversations between Señor Valverde and the Administration, the High Commission would none the less establish a customs cordon on the 15th April. The administrator replied the same day, pointing out the unfortunate impression that would be caused by the Spanish authorities acting in this way before they had even had time to examine the latest proposals. Copies of this correspondence, including a note by Mr. Dicken on the negotiations which took place on the 12th and 13th April, to which is attached the text of the proposed agreement reached with Señor Valverde, are herewith enclosed.

3. Two points arise from this correspondence and from the subsequent action taken by the Spanish authorities on the 15th April, as recorded in my telegram No. 14. Firstly, it seems quite clear that the Spanish authorities have been actuated not by economic but by purely political motives. They have produced no figures to controvert the figures of the Tangier customs, but merely state that they cannot believe that the goods sent forward into the Spanish zone form such a small percentage of the clearings of the Tangier custom-house. The Administration consequently, to dispel the Spanish suspicions, have offered to allow the Spanish customs officials to check the returns for themselves and to take note of everything that leaves the city for the Spanish zone. The Spanish authorities have simply ignored this and established a customs cordon, as threatened in the letter dated the 10th April, *i.e.*, before the arrival of Señor Valverde, but only received on the 14th April, after he had left.

4. Secondly, the question arises how far the Spaniards have contravened the existing treaties by their action. It is universally agreed by all but the Spanish protagonists that customs duties can only be charged once within Morocco ; that once goods are cleared at Tangier no further duty can be charged ; the Spanish authorities being limited to reclaiming from the Tangier customs the amount of duty paid on goods which may enter the Spanish zone. Not only this, but it is very open to

question whether the Spaniards have the right to reclaim more than 10 per cent. customs duty and whether they have any claim at all to the 2½ per cent. special tax (laid down by the Act of Algeciras). Finally, there can be no question whatever that the Spaniards have no right to charge duty on goods of Moroccan origin.

5 Yesterday a meeting took place of the Tangier Interantional Chamber of Commerce, and I have the honour to enclose a statement of the President of the Chamber which succinctly summarises the position.

6. The matter will come up in the Assembly on the 20th April.

7. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador at Madrid.

I have, &c.
R. H. CLIVE.

Enclosure 1 in No. 43.

M. Saavedra to M. Alberge.—(Communicated April 2.)

(Traduction.) *Haut-Commissariat d'Espagne au Maroc*
M. l'Administrateur, [*non datée*].

COMME suite à la conférence entre les représentants des douanes des zones de Tanger, espagnole et française, ténue à Tanger du 2 au 5 décembre dernier, pour arrêter les moyens de procurer l'application des dispositions de l'article 20 de la convention signée à Paris le 7 décembre 1923, le représentant de ce Haut-Commissariat lui a soumis le projet de règlement rédigé par la commission, et dans lequel après avoir défini la distinction des marchandises de production marocaine ou étrangère et les modalités des opérations de transit maritime, de transbordement et de cabotage, il était proposé que la part des perceptions reconnue à la zone espagnole par le statut fût versée par la zone de Tanger à l'Administration du Khalifat, sous la forme d'un forfait. Ce forfait, d'après les représentants des douanes—et sous réserve naturellement de l'approbation de leurs Gouvernements respectifs—pouvait être fixé en principe à 360,000 pesetas par an pour les droits d'importation et à 140,000 pesetas pour les taxes de consommation perçues sur certains articles.

L'Administration du Khalifat, consulté par le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté le Roi d'Espagne, son protecteur, après avoir étudié cette affaire en apportant à son examen la meilleure volonté et les dispositions les plus amicales, a le grand regret de ne pouvoir donner son accord au projet de règlement, sur tout en considération de ce que la chiffre du forfait proposé est considéré par les services compétents de la zone espagnole comme portant atteinte aux intérêts de cette zone et ne correspondant aucunement à l'importance réelle des quantités de marchandises qui entrent par Tanger et traversent sa zone à destination de la zone espagnole.

En conséquence, l'Administration de Son Altesse impériale le Khalifat, considérant qu'elle ne disposait pour le moment d'aucun autre moyen de garantir l'exécution de l'article 20 de la Convention de Paris, a décidé d'établir une douane sur toute la frontière de la zone de Tanger et pris les mesures nécessaires pour que ces douanes commencent à fonctionner le 15 avril prochain.

Un devoir de considération, l'intérêt et l'on pourrait dire, la nécessité même d'établir un contact fréquent et amical entre les deux Administrations, ainsi que la souci de courtoisie auquel l'Administration de la Zone espagnole se croit particulièrement tenue en cette occasion, l'amène à se hâter de faire cette communication à l'Administration de Tanger. Elle croit devoir ajouter que la mesure prise n'empêche point que le Haut-Commissariat reste disposé, après comme avant l'établissement des douanes intérieures, à prendre en considération toute proposition émanant des organismes ou des autorités compétentes de la zone de Tanger, et qui soit susceptible de conduire à une solution fondée sur l'application de l'article 20 précité de la Convention de Paris et sur le désir commun de trouver la combinaison la mieux adaptée aux nécessités du commerce de Tanger et de sa zone, sans cependant porter un grave préjudice aux intérêts fiscaux de la zone espagnole.

Veuillez, &c.
(P.O.) Le Délégué général,
DIEGO SAAVEDRA.

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Enclosure 2 in No. 43.

M. Alberge to M. Saavedra.

(Traduction.)

Tanger, le 7 avril 1926.

M. le Délégué général,

J'AI l'honneur d'accuser réception de la lettre par laquelle vous voulez bien m'informer que l'Administration du Khalifat et le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté le Roi d'Espagne regrettent vivement de ne pouvoir adopter les conclusions de la conférence douanière qui eut lieu à Tanger du 2 au 5 décembre écoulé, parce que le chiffre du forfait proposé leur paraît insuffisant, avaient décidé d'établir, à partir du 15 courant, un cordon douanier sur toute la frontière de ladite zone.

En terminant, vous voulez bien m'assurer qu'avant comme après l'établissement des douanes intérieures, le Haut-Commissariat reste disposé à étudier, d'accord avec les autorités de la zone de Tanger, la création d'un régime qui s'accorderait à la fois avec les intérêts du commerce tangérois et les intérêts fiscaux de la zone espagnole.

Je suis heureux de vous faire savoir que mon Administration est animée du même désir que le Haut-Commissariat en ce qui concerne la recherche d'une solution susceptible de concilier les intérêts des deux parties. Puisque, au surplus, les deux zones n'ont d'autre intention que de revendiquer ce qui leur revient légitimement, et que le désaccord actuel ne porte pas sur une question de principe, mais uniquement sur une question de fait (qui est l'évaluation de l'importance réelle des quantités de marchandises débarquées à Tanger, destination de la zone espagnole). Il semble que, en rapprochant les données numériques, les statistiques et tous autres renseignements recueillis des deux côtés, on doive arriver à un arrangement qui permette d'éviter la dépense inutile et frustratoire d'un cordon douanier et des multiples difficultés qui en résulteraient.

Veuillez, &c.

P. ALBERGE.

Enclosure 3 in No. 43.

Note on Negotiations with the Spanish Zone on the Customs Question.

THE Spanish consul-general having formally notified the Administrator of the intention of the Spanish Government to establish a customs frontier all round the zone as from the 15th April, a reply was sent suggesting that there was room for negotiation before any decisive step was taken. It also appeared to us that the Spaniards, in view of the alarm excited in the town, showed signs of being not unwilling to find a safe way out and avoiding the frontier while "saving face."

In any case it was arranged that Señor Valverde, Director of Finance of the Spanish zone, should come here and discuss what arrangements were possible with us.

He came, and the first meeting took place at 5 P.M. on the 12th April.

The following is the substance of the first meeting :—

1. *The Meaning of Article* 20.

Señor Valverde pretended that this article gave them the right to close the frontier and make all goods passing pay, irrespective of whether they had previously paid Moroccan customs before, leaving to the individual the duty of getting himself repaid in case of double payment.

We contested this view.

Our view is that in effect article 20 taken literally would allow the Spanish land customs only to collect on goods which had not paid customs at Tangier, but been consigned through in transit, the fact of being removed from customs and paying the tax at Tangier in itself being enough to establish that the goods are for the "consommation" of the zone.

We admitted, however, that this literal interpretation was probably not the real spirit of the article, and that "consumed" was not intended to mean other than its obvious non-technical meaning, and that the intention of the legislator (which, however, he had failed to express in the wording of the article) was that each zone should only benefit by the tax on goods actually consumed there.

Admitting this we maintained, however, that a person who has once paid customs for his goods to enter Morocco cannot be made to pay again, but that the claim of the Spanish can only be against the Tangier zone for the money they have collected on goods subsequently removed from their zone. We pointed out that in case of the Spaniards trying their theory, individuals, especially Italians and Americans, would certainly refuse to pay, and grave incidents might result.

He seemed impressed.

The summary of our position is :—

1. Article 20 is to be taken in the spirit and not the strict letter.
2. Taken even thus it does not establish three customs districts in Morocco, but only an obligation between the three zones to settle the division between themselves of the proceeds of customs in a certain way. No individual can be made to pay twice even under promise of repayment.

This view would lead logically to customs posts for statistical purposes only.

2. *The Volume of Goods passing from one Zone to the other.*

We produced statistics made by the Tangier customs on the last eight months establishing the quantities in and out by land.

Señor Valverde had no figures, but said they had always thought the balance in favour of the Spanish zone was much larger, probably 50 to 60 per cent. of the total customs of Tangier; our figures only give about 20 per cent. Putting aside this disagreement for the moment, we agreed that any system of *forfait* should be for not too long a period at the start, and that statistics should be still collected with a view to revising the *forfait* after further experience.

After some discussion Señor Valverde agreed that it would suit the Spanish case to have agents at our posts at the outskirts of the town to check our calculations instead of forming a long chain of posts all round our zone. He preferred the *forfait* should be a *forfait* percentage on our customs takings, and not a fixed sum of money.

3. *The taxe spéciale of* 2½ *per Cent.*

Señor Valverde claimed that this should be taken into account in the calculation of the *forfait* or other solution to be found.

We resisted.

We maintained that by the Act of Algeciras this tax was primarily intended to assist the port of entry.

That since it was a percentage increase in the *ad valorem* customs dues, it was only collectable when such valuation had been made, and that consequently the difficulty here arose over the literal interpretation of article 20 and its spirit as already explained.

Since literally article 20 only provided for goods passing from zone to zone in transit, *i.e.*, without paying duty at the Port of Tangier, it was evidently impossible for Tangier to collect this 2½ per cent. on such goods, but that the spirit was indicated by the express provision of the statute that, in the one case where there was no transit, *i.e.*, where it was possible, the case of tobacco, the whole of the 2½ per cent. remained with the Tangier zone wherever the tobacco was smoked.

As we could reach no agreement on this point, it was decided that it should be referred back to the signatories of the statute for an interpretation as to what they really intended.

4. *Export Duties.*

We agreed over this that the letter and spirit mean that the zone of production of the goods should get the export duty. That, consequently, in the case of goods exported from Tangier port with certificate of origin of the Spanish zone, Tangier should repay to the Spanish zone the tax collected.

(*Conference then adjourned till to-morrow.*)

(*April* 13, 1926.)

At 10 A.M. the conference met again.

The discussion turned almost entirely on the figures of the quantities of goods passing from zone to zone given by the Tangier customs. Señor Valverde had no

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concrete basis of agreement at all only "we have always thought," "I can hardly believe," "we could never accept so little as that," and so on.

He pressed for a system of customs frontier (admitting our point that it must be payments from zone to zone only) whereby goods should be declared on passing and papers made out showing the customs which would have been paid, such to form the basis of a settlement of accounts between the zones monthly.

We resisted this on the ground that though better than their first idea, it was still a considerable delay and embarrassment to commerce and against the wishes of the commercial community of the zone.

Finally, after a very protracted discussion, a compromise was reached in the terms of the following statement which Señor Valverde declared himself willing to recommend to his Government for immediate acceptance, it was understood that the Administration would not submit them to the Assembly till it knew whether the Spanish Government accepted or not :—

(NOTE.—These are the actual terms of the proposed agreement reached with Señor Valverde.)

1. Pour la période du 1er juin au 31 décembre 1925 la question est mise à l'étude.

2. Pour le premier trimestre de 1926 un règlement provisoire des sommes revenant à la zone espagnole sera fait sur la base des statistiques établies par la douane de Tanger en janvier, février et mars. La liquidation définitive sera faite sur la base de la moyenne des douze mois compris entre le 1er avril et le 31 mars 1927.

Ce règlement comprendra :

1. Les droits de douane à l'importation et à l'exportation ;

2. La taxe spéciale de 2½ pour cent (étant entendu que la question de l'attribution définitive de cette taxe à la zone d'importation ou à celle de destination, en ce qui concerne les marchandises dédouanées à Tanger, sera soumise aux Puissances signataires de la Convention de Paris).

3. Ultérieurement et jusqu'au 31 mars 1927, le règlement des sommes revenant à la zone espagnole sera opéré trimestriellement sur la base des statistiques établies contradictoirement dans les postes de surveillance douanière de Tanger entre les agents de la douane tangéroises et des agents détachés des douanes espagnoles.

4. En ce qui concerne les taxes de consommation, la zone de Tanger reversera à la zone espagnole à partir du 1er mai 1926, sur la base des tarifs en vigueur à Tanger, les droits afférents aux quantités de produits taxés expédiées de Tanger en zone espagnole, déduction faite des quantités reçues de ladite zone.

5. Le résultat des constatations de la période du 1er avril 1926 au 31 mars 1927 servira de base à la détermination du pourcentage devant revenir dans la suite à la zone espagnole sur les recettes douanières et le produit des taxes de consommation perçues à Tanger.

Enclosure 4 in No. 43.

M. Saavedra to M. Alberge.

(Reçu le 14 avril à 11 heures du matin.)

(Traduction.)

Haut-Commissariat d'Espagne au Maroc,
Tétouan, le 10 avril 1926.

M. l'Administrateur,

J'AI eu l'honneur de recevoir votre lettre datée du 7 courant, par laquelle, en réponse à la mienne du 31 mars écoulé, vous m'informez que votre Administration est, comme le Haut-Commissariat, animée du désir de rechercher une formule de nature à concilier les intérêts des deux zones relativement au régime douanier à établir en conformité de l'article 20 de la Convention de Paris du 7 décembre 1923. Vous ajoutez qu'étant donné qu'il n'existe aucune divergence sur la question de principe, mais seulement un désaccord sur l'évaluation du volume de marchandises débarquées à Tanger et destinées à la zone espagnole, il vous paraît naturel que le rapprochement des tableaux statistiques et des renseignements recueillis de part et d'autre permette d'arriver à un arrangement.

En réponse à votre communication et en vous confirmant que le Haut-Commissariat est très favorable à la recherche d'une solution satisfaisante pour les deux parties, je tiens à vous signaler que, tant que le chemin de fer de Tanger à Fez ne fonctionnera pas, les statistiques dont on peut disposer ne constituent pas des éléments d'appréciation aussi précis et aussi complets qu'il serait désirable ; d'autre part, il y a un tel écart sur ce point, entre les techniciens espagnols et les techniciens français qui ont étudié la question, qu'il ne paraît pas facile, malgré les excellentes et amicales dispositions existant de part et d'autre, d'arriver actuellement à une solution acceptable pour la zone espagnole. Cependant, pour donner une marque de ses bonnes dispositions, le Haut-Commissariat non seulement accepte que les délégués financiers des deux protectorats se réunissent à Tanger pour échanger leurs impressions, mais encore il s'en félicite ainsi que le Gouvernement du Khalifat, d'autant plus que cette réunion n'empêchera pas que, sans préjudicier aux résultats que pourraient donner des conversations, le Haut-Commissariat applique les mesures qu'il a déjà arrêtées et établisse, à partir du 15 courant, le cordon douanier.

Veuillez, &c.
DIEGO SAAVEDRA.

Enclosure 5 in No. 43.

M. Alberge to M. Saavedra.

(Traduction.)

Tanger, le 14 avril 1926.

M. le Délégué général,

PAR lettre en date du 10 avril, vous voulez bien m'informer que, tout en consentant à envoyer un représentant à une réunion où serait étudiée à nouveau la question de la détermination de la part devant revenir à la zone espagnole dans les recettes douanières de Tanger, le Haut-Commissariat maintient sa décision d'établir, à partir du 15 avril courant, un cordon douanier autour de la zone de Tanger, parce qu'en raison de l'écart existant entre les statistiques de la douane de Tanger et les estimations de la douane espagnole, l'accord paraît difficile à réaliser sur un chiffre et qu'il importe de garantir l'application de l'article 20 de la Convention de Paris.

J'ai l'honneur de vous signaler qu'en considération précisément de la difficulté d'aboutir à la fixation immédiate d'un chiffre forfaitaire, la zone de Tanger a offert, dans la conférence tenue hier, 13 avril, avec M. Valverde, de pratiquer pendant une année un système de reversement basé sur des statistiques trimestrielles établies contradictoirement avec des agents détachés des douanes espagnoles dans les postes situés autour de Tanger.

J'ai tout lieu d'espérer que cette proposition, qui donne toute garantie aux deux zones, sera agréée par les autorités espagnoles et conduira à un accord définitif.

Dans ces conditions, et sans vouloir discuter la question de la régularité des perceptions qui pourraient être faites à l'entrée de la zone espagnole sur des marchandises déjà dédouanées à Tanger, je suis obligé de vous signaler la pénible impression que causerait l'établissement d'un cordon douanier avant que les autorités espagnoles aient pu examiner les offres de l'Administration de Tanger, alors surtout qu'aucun retard dans le règlement de cette affaire ne peut être imputé à cette Administration, qui n'avait pas à chercher d'arrangement nouveau avant d'être informée par votre lettre du début de ce mois que les autorités espagnoles n'acceptaient pas les conclusions de la conférence de décembre dernier.

Veuillez, &c.
P. ALBERGE.

Enclosure 6 in No. 43.

Extract from the "Dépêche marocaine" of April 16, 1926.

LE surplus de la séance a été entièrement occupé par la question brûlante du cordon douanier.

Malgré la difficulté d'entamer une discussion sur un sujet où la controverse pouvait amener des frictions, ce sujet a été épuisé avec la plus parfaite courtoisie et l'harmonie n'a pas cessé de régner.

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Pour abréger ce long exposé, nous nous contenterons de donner en réduction la note lue par le président au sujet du graphique officiel des pourparlers intervenus et que l'on peut scinder en trois chapitres.

Cordon douanier autour de la Zone de Tanger.

Aperçu des pourparlers intervenus :

1. Tentative faite en juin 1925 par la douane tangéroise, sur laquelle les parties sont revenues après la protestation du Comité de Contrôle, et après laquelle il a été décidé à réunir une conférence douanière en décembre 1925. Cette conférence entre les délégués douaniers des trois zones aboutit à l'établissement d'un projet de règlement précisant :

(*a.*) La distinction à faire entre marchandises marocaines et étrangères ;
(*b.*) La réglementation du transbordement et du cabotage ;
(*c.*) Le reversement par la zone de Tanger d'une somme forfaitaire de 360,000 pesetas espagnoles pour droits d'importation et 140,000 pesetas espagnoles pour taxes de consommation sur des marchandises dédouanées à Tanger et réexpédiées ultérieurement sur la zone espagnole (total 500,000).

2. Le Haut-Commissariat espagnol à Tétouan notifie, au début d'avril 1926, à Tanger qu'il repousse les conclusions de la conférence douanière ci-dessus, et qu'il va établir, le 15 avril 1926, un cordon douanier autour de la zone de Tanger, mais qu'il reste disposé à examiner les propositions que la zone de Tanger pourra lui faire, tant avant qu'après l'établissement du cordon.

L'Administration de Tanger lui répond aussitôt que, puisque le désaccord porte seulement sur une question de chiffres (évaluation des marchandises dédouanées à Tanger et réexpédiées en zone espagnole), on doit pouvoir arriver à un arrangement en rapprochant les données statistiques de part et d'autre.

Le Haut-Commissariat espagnol à Tétouan, en réponse, envoie à Tanger M. Valverde, directeur des finances, pour traiter la question au point de vue technique à des conférences qui ont eu lieu les 12 et 14 avril avec l'Administration et la douane de Tanger.

L'Administration de Tanger, en raison de l'impossibilité d'arriver à la fixation immédiate d'une somme forfaitaire, propose le 13 avril courant que :

"Pendant un an, les reversements à faire à la zone espagnole soient basés sur des statistiques trimestrielles, établies contradictoirement dans les postes situés autour de Tanger par les agents de la douane de Tanger et des agents détachés de la douane de la zone espagnole."

3. Le 14 avril courant, l'Administration de Tanger reçoit du Haut-Commissariat espagnol à Tétouan une lettre dans laquelle il l'informe que, "sans préjudice aux résultats que peuvent donner les conversations en cours, le cordon douanier sera établi le 15 avril courant."

Conclusion.

Il y a tout lieu d'espérer qu'en définitive le Haut-Commissariat espagnol à Tétouan acceptera les propositions logiques et commerciales de l'Administration de Tanger, garantissant les intérêts fiscaux de la zone espagnole, sans porter atteinte à la liberté du commerce tangérois.

Le Statut de Tanger n'a d'ailleurs pas divisé le Maroc en trois différentes zones douanières, mais il a simplement affirmé que les marchandises débarquées à Tanger et y bénéficiant des régimes ordinaires du transit, de l'entrepôt (par conséquent du dédouanement) ou de l'admission temporaire, redoivent, à leur entrée en zone espagnole pour y être consommées, les droits de douane à prévoir par la zone espagnole.

Cette interprétation logique du texte de l'article 20 du statut doit évidemment conduire à un accord douanier de zone à zone comme unique solution possible et admissible, en maintenant absolument la liberté complète du commerce tangérois avec les autres zones marocaines. C'est en ce sens que notre intervention doit se manifester de suite.

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[W 3421/76/28] No. 44.

Mr. Clive to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received April 24.)

(No. 16.)
(Telegraphic.) *Tangier, April 23, 1926.*

MY immediately preceding telegram and my despatch No. 80 : Customs.

Following decision was adopted unanimously by Legislative Assembly on 22nd April :—

"Assembly begs Committee of Control—

"1. Urgently to consult signatory Powers of Tangier Convention with a view to obtaining an authoritative interpretation regarding method of application of article 20.

"2. To beg the authorities of neighbouring zone to suspend measures recently taken pending a solution of 1."

Committee of Control have to-day approved this decision and have requested Spanish consul-general to forward it to Spanish High Commission.

Committee of Control respectfully suggested that effect should be given by three signatory Powers to 1, and that Spanish Government should be invited to give favourable consideration to 2.

The above identic telegram is being addressed by my colleagues to their respective Governments.

(Repeated to Madrid.)

[W 3427/76/28] No. 45.

Mr. Clive to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received April 24.)

(No. 17.)
(Telegraphic.) *Tangier, April 23, 1926.*

MY immediately preceding telegram.

When it became clear that Spanish attempt to kill Tangier by a customs cordon had failed of its object, namely, to rouse public opinion in Tangier against statute, my French colleague and I considered that, to enable Spanish Government gracefully to recede from their position it was necessary to save their face.

Credit of getting unanimous vote of Assembly to decision quoted is due to Colonel Ellis, and my immediately preceding telegram was so drafted in Committee of Control in order to obtain concurrence of Spanish consul-general.

I trust, therefore, that it may meet with your approval.

(Repeated to Madrid.)

[W 3527/76/28] No. 46.

M. de Fleuriau to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received April 27.)

LE Gouvernement français vient d'apprendre par son représentant à Tanger que les consuls généraux dans cette ville, réunis le 23 avril dernier en Comité de Contrôle, ont décidé d'envoyer à leurs Gouvernements respectifs un télégramme identique ainsi conçu :

"L'Assemblée législative, dans sa séance du 22 avril, a décidé à l'unanimité de prier le Comité de Contrôle :

"1. De consulter d'urgence les Puissances signataires de la Convention de Paris en vue d'obtenir des précisions sur l'interprétation et les modalités d'application de l'article 20 du statut ;

"2. De demander aux autorités de la zone voisine de suspendre les mesures récemment prises en attendant la solution du vœu qui précède.

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"Dans sa réunion du 23 avril, le Comité de Contrôle a approuvé cette décision et il a été entendu que le consul d'Espagne serait prié de la porter à la connaissance du Haut-Commissaire espagnol à Tétouan. Le Comité de Contrôle s'est ensuite arrêté aux suggestions suivantes :

"1. Demander aux trois Puissances signataires de bien vouloir donner suite au premier de ces vœux ;

"2. Faire en sorte que le second soit recommandé à la bienveillante attention du Gouvernement espagnol."

L'Ambassadeur de France a été chargé de demander à son Excellence le principal Secrétaire d'État pour les Affaires étrangères si le Gouvernement britannique avait reçu de son représentant à Tanger les mêmes informations et dans quel sens il avait l'intention de lui répondre. Le Gouvernement français désirerait être ainsi mis en mesure d'agir d'accord, le cas échéant, avec les Puissances signataires de la Convention du Statut de Tanger.

M. de Fleuriau saisit, &c.

Ambassade de France, Londres,
le 26 avril 1926.

[W 3602/76/28] No. 47.

Sir H. Rumbold to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(*Received April* 28.)

(No. 45.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Madrid, April* 28, 1926.

YOUR telegram No. 24 and Tangier telegram No. 17.

I ventured to anticipate instructions contained in your telegram under reference by asking Minister for Foreign Affairs yesterday to suspend measures recently taken by authorities of Spanish Government to levy customs duties on merchandise coming from international zone pending an authoritative interpretation regarding method of application of article No. 20 or concoction of arrangement regarding distribution of sums realised by customs duties which would be satisfactory to authorities of the three zones. I added that a conciliatory attitude on the part of the Spanish Government in this matter would be in keeping with his Excellency's recent statement of intention of Spanish Government to co-operate in working the statute.

Minister for Foreign Affairs, who had not heard of proposals contained in Tangier telegram No. 16, promised to mention my request to the President of the Council.

(Repeated to Tangier.)

[W 3527/76/28] No. 48.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to M. de Fleuriau.

Foreign Office, April 30, 1926.

Your Excellency,

IN your note of the 26th instant you enquired whether His Majesty's Government had received the identic telegram despatched by the members of the Committee of Control to their respective Governments regarding the Spanish customs barrier around the Tangier zone, and what reply His Majesty's Government proposed to make.

2. I have the honour to inform your Excellency that His Majesty's Government have received the telegram and have informed His Majesty's consul-general at Tangier that they approve the action of the Committee of Control. If the French and Spanish Governments approve it also, it will presumably be necessary for the three signatory Governments of the Tangier Convention to concert in drawing up an interpretation of article 20 in accordance with paragraph 1 of the resolution of the Assembly. I am consulting the competent Department of His Majesty's Government on the question, and hope shortly to be able to communicate to you the views of His Majesty's Government on the interpretation of the article.

3. In the meantime I have instructed His Majesty's Ambassador at Madrid to express the hope that, pending the discussion of the question, the Spanish Government will see their way to suspend their recent measures for the collection of inter-zonal duties.

I have, &c.
AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

[W 3427/76/28] No. 49.

Foreign Office to Board of Trade.

Foreign Office, April 30, 1926.

Sir,

WITH reference to the letter from this Department of the 25th instant, I am directed by Secretary Sir Austen Chamberlain to transmit herewith a copy of two telegrams from His Majesty's consul-general at Tangier reporting on the steps taken by the Tangier Assembly and the Committee of Control to secure the withdrawal of the Spanish customs cordon around the Tangier zone. It is greatly to be hoped that the Spanish Government will agree to suspend the measures recently taken, but even in that event it will be necessary to define the treaty position and the Secretary of State will be glad to have the advice of the Board in the matter.

2. It appears from Mr. Clive's despatch No. 80 of the 16th instant that the Spanish customs cordon on the Tangier frontier is at present levying on *all* goods which pass into the Spanish zone a duty of 12½ per cent. *ad valorem*, *i.e.*, the maximum of 10 per cent. *ad valorem* and the "taxe spéciale" of 2½ per cent. imposed by the Act of Algeciras, to which reference is made below. The treaty provisions governing the customs relations between the Tangier and Spanish zones are contained in article 20 of the Tangier Convention, which reads :—

"The Tangier customs shall levy duties and taxes only on goods destined exclusively for consumption in the zone.

"Goods landed at Tangier and destined for use or consumption in the French or Spanish zones shall enjoy the benefit of the ordinary rules of transit, warehousing or temporary admission, the proper customs duties being collected at the custom-houses of the zone of consumption.

"The transit regulations will be based on the conclusions of the Barcelona Conference of 1921.

"Similarly, imported goods arriving through the French or Spanish zones shall pay customs duty on entering the Tangier zone.

"Export duties will be leviable only on goods originating in the zone."

This article clearly only entitles the Spaniards to levy duties on imported goods and there is no justification whatever for their present action in levying duties on goods of Moroccan origin.

3. Goods imported into the Spanish zone through Tangier fall under two heads : first, those consigned in transit to the Spanish zone, and secondly, those consigned to merchants in the Tangier zone, who subsequently sell them in small lots to clients in the Spanish zone. In the first case the procedure is simple. The goods benefit by the ordinary transit regulations and do not pay duty until they reach the zone to which they are consigned. In the second case the application of article 20 is somewhat more complicated. When the question was discussed at the Tangier Conference it was suggested, either that the Spanish customs should subsequently recover from the Tangier customs the amount of duty already paid in respect of each particular consignment or that an agreed lump sum should be paid by Tangier to the Spanish zone. The Spanish delegates expressed no definite opinion on the relative merits of these systems, and said that the matter would be adjusted between the Tangier and Spanish customs. In any event there is no justification for requiring goods to pay the same duties twice. All the Spanish authorities are entitled to do is to make arrangements with the Tangier customs for the recovery of the duties which the latter have collected in respect of imported goods subsequently sent to the Spanish zone.

4. The third point to which I am to draw attention is the claim of the Spanish customs that they are entitled to the "taxe spéciale" of 2½ per cent. in respect of

all goods entering the Spanish zone from Tangier. The "taxe spéciale" was established by article 66 of the Act of Algeciras which reads as follows:—

> "A titre temporaire, les marchandises d'origine étrangère seront frappées à leur entrée au Maroc d'une taxe spéciale s'élevant à 2½ pour cent *ad valorem*. Le produit intégral de cette taxe formera un fonds spécial, qui sera affecté aux dépenses et à l'exécution de travaux publics, destinés au développement de la navigation et de commerce en général dans l'Empire chérifien."

The object of this special tax of 2½ per cent. was to raise funds for improving the ports and the roads, &c., leading from the ports, and the proceeds of the tax were not regarded as customs receipts. In the circumstances it seems inequitable that the "taxe spéciale" paid in respect of goods consigned to Tangier and subsequently sent to the Spanish zone should not be retained by Tangier. As a matter of fact the question was discussed at the Tangier Conference in some detail. No verbatim record of the proceedings of the conference was kept, but the following extracts from the minutes represent the official record of the discussion:—

14th Meeting, November 24, 1923.

"Mr. Robertson et Mr. Villiers seraient d'avis que les marchandises ou au moins certaines d'entre elles en transit à Tanger pour les deux autres zones paient la taxe spéciale de 2½ pour cent. L'absence de ces droits se ferait lourdement sentir dans le budget de la zone.

"M. de Sorbier répond que si les marchandises en transit à Tanger payaient la taxe spéciale, ce serait au détriment des deux autres zones, qui n'accepteraient pas cette manière d'agir.

15th Meeting, November 25, 1923.

"Mr. Villiers insiste de nouveau que la taxe de 2½ pour cent sur les marchandises en transit à Tanger lui soit abandonnée. Il s'agit de permettre à Tanger de vivre avec des ressources suffisantes.

"M. de Sorbier répond que les zones espagnole et française se trouveraient frustrées et élèveraient des protestations. D'ailleurs, il sera pratiquement très difficile de percevoir une taxe de 2½ pour cent *ad valorem* sur le prix des marchandises dont on ne connaîtra la valeur que lorsqu'elles seront dédouanées dans les zones espagnole et française."

17th Meeting, Novmeber 26, 1923.

"Pour donner satisfaction au désir exprimé dans une précédente séance par Mr. Villiers, M. de Beaumarchais propose l'abandon à la zone de Tanger du produit du droit de 2½ pour cent sur les tabacs importés par Tanger.

"La conférence se rallie à cette proposition et décide d'insérer dans l'article 17 un troisième paragraphe rédigé ainsi:

> "'Le droit de 2½ pour cent dont sont passibles les tabacs importés par Tanger est intégralement acquis à la zone.'"

It will be seen from the above that the British delegates made an effort to secure that the proceeds of the "taxe spéciale" even on goods in transit should be handed over to the Tangier Administration. The Spanish delegates took no part in the discussion, but in view of the opposition of the French delegates, the British proposal was withdrawn on the understanding that an exception should be made in the case of tobacco in transit. The language of the British delegates and the argument used by M. de Sorbier at the fifteenth meeting indicates that it was understood that in the case of goods consigned to Tangier, as opposed to those in transit, the "taxe spéciale" should be retained by the Tangier customs, even if the goods were subsequently forwarded to the Spanish zone.

5. The last point to be considered is that of the consumption taxes. As the name indicates, the consumption taxes should be levied by the authorities of the zone in which the goods are consumed, and although the point is not specifically dealt with in the Tangier Convention, it appears in accordance with its spirit that Spanish authorities should obtain the proceeds of the consumption tax on all imported goods which pass from Tangier into the Spanish zone. In the case of goods which are not in transit the proper procedure would be for the Spanish customs to recover

from Tangier the amount of the consumption duties already levied by the Tangier customs.

6. To sum up, the Spanish customs are entitled to levy no duties whatever on goods of Moroccan origin; goods in transit to the Spanish zone benefit by the transit regulations and pay customs duties, the "taxe spéciale" and consumption duties to the Spanish customs on their arrival in the Spanish zone; as regards goods consigned to Tangier and subsequently forwarded to the Spanish zone, the Spanish customs are entitled to recover from Tangier the amount of the customs duties and the consumption duties levied by the Tangier customs, but they are not entitled to the proceeds of the "taxe spéciale."

7. I am to enquire whether the Board concur in the conclusions stated above. Should the Spanish Government accept the proposal of the Tangier Assembly, quoted in Mr. Clive's telegram No. 16, it will be necessary for the three signatory Governments to concert in framing an interpretation of article 20 of the Tangier Convention. In the not unlikely event of it being impossible to reconcile the views of His Majesty's Government and the Spanish Government, the only course will be to refer the interpretation of article 20 to international arbitration in accordance with the provisions of article 54 of the Tangier Convention.

8. The Secretary of State will be glad to receive an early reply to this letter as he is anxious to acquaint the French Government with his views as soon as possible.

I am, &c.
G. H. VILLIERS.

[W 4041/76/28] No. 50.

Mr. Clive to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(*Received May* 11.)

(No. 92.)
Tangier, May 5, 1926.

Sir,

IN my telegram No. 20 of the 3rd May I had the honour to report that the Tangier Administration had received a note from the High Commission at Tetuan couched in terms which gave it rather the appearance of an ultimatum than what might have been expected from the second paragraph of Sir Horace Rumbold's telegram No. 47 of the 30th April. The implication is clear throughout that a dilatory and evasive administration in Tangier must be brought to reason. Before, therefore, the Spanish authorities will consent to resume negotiations certain bases must be accepted. At the same time, they will admit of no discussion as to the regularity of their action in establishing the customs cordon or in collecting the 2½ per cent. special tax. In other words, they decline to agree to any discussion as to the meaning of article 20, which is what every public body in Tangier, irrespective of nationality, have unanimously demanded.

2. I have the honour to enclose a French translation of this note, as well as the French draft of the reply that will be sent as soon as it can be translated into Spanish. You will observe that in the last paragraph the Administrator politely declines to enter into the question of the customs cordon and the special tax on the ground that the signatory Powers have, at the request of the Assembly, been invited by the Committee of Control to give an authoritative interpretation of what is exactly the meaning of article 20.

3. It is worthy of note that, while Sir Horace Rumbold is informed in Madrid that 25 per cent. of the customs receipts will be accepted provisionally, the High Commission in Tetuan demands 30 per cent. until such time as it may be possible to ascertain the exact percentage, when the Tangier–Fez Railway shall have been opened to traffic. The latter is clearly an unreasonable demand, as is pointed out in the Administrator's reply. Moreover, the opening to traffic—whenever that may come about—of the Tangier–Fez Railway will have no effect on the trade between Tangier and Tetuan.

I have, &c.
R. H. CLIVE.

Enclosure 1 in No. 50.

High Commissioner to the Administrator, Tangier Zone.

(Traduction.)

Tétouan, le 27 avril 1926.

M. l'Administrateur,

LE 23 courant m'est parvenue la lettre datée du 14, dans laquelle vous accusez réception de ma communication du 10, et vous exposez que, sans vouloir entrer dans la discussion de la régularité des perceptions qu'effectue la zone espagnole, vous espérez que, pour éviter la pénible impression que produirait l'installation d'un cordon douanier à la frontière, seront mises en pratique les mesures prévues dans les propositions faites à M. Valverde à la réunion du 13 avril.

La zone espagnole ne peut pas engager de discussion sur la régularité de ces perceptions, car une semblable discussion supposerait qu'il y a doute sur un droit clairement défini dans le statut, et auquel l'Administration du Khalifat ne peut renoncer à aucun moment. Mais elle est disposée à en suspendre l'application s'il se présente un moyen d'éviter de porter préjudice aux intérêts économiques de Tanger, tout en garantissant les intérêts de la zone espagnole.

Mon Administration estime que vos propositions du 13 ne donnent pas cette garantie, et, comme la zone espagnole est animée du plus vif désir d'arriver à une entente avec l'Administration de Tanger, pour fixer les termes sur lesquels l'accord serait possible, je vais exposer les bases dont l'acceptation par votre Administration conduirait à la conclusion rapide d'une convention qui permettrait de supprimer dans peu de jours le cordon douanier actuellement établi.

Ces bases seraient les suivantes :

1. L'Administration de Tanger s'engagerait à verser au cours du mois de mai prochain les sommes dues du 1er janvier au 14 avril et les arriérés correspondants à la période de juillet à décembre 1925.
2. La base qui devra être adoptée pour le décompte de la contribution, aussi bien pour les périodes déjà expirées qu'à l'avenir jusqu'à ce qu'aient pu être obtenues des données statistiques contradictoires que permettront de compléter les renseignements que fournira le fonctionnement du chemin de fer de Tanger à Fez, sera de 30 pour cent des recettes totales encaissées par la douane de Tanger, au titre des droits d'importation, de taxe spéciale et d'exportation. Ce pourcentage pourrait encore être réduit, quoique dans une faible mesure, comme preuve de notre désir d'arriver à une solution.
3. Les sommes dues par la douane de Tanger à la zone espagnole seraient versées à trimestre échu.
4. Des postes de statistique seraient établis aux alentours de Tanger, au nombre et dans la forme nécessaires pour obtenir la plus grande exactitude dans leurs renseignements. Avec les résultats fournis par ces statistiques et ceux que donnera rapidement le chemin de fer de Tanger à Fez, il sera possible de vérifier et d'éprouver dans quelle mesure le chiffre fixé provisoirement aura été conforme à la réalité. Le pourcentage réel aurait effet rétroactif, et servirait de base à une revision acceptée d'ores et déjà par la zone espagnole et qui pourrait lui être favorable comme à l'Administration de Tanger.
5. En ce qui concerne la taxe spéciale de 2½ pour cent, la zone espagnole estime que les termes de l'article 20 du statut ne laissent aucun doute sur la zone à qui elle doit revenir, puisque cet article prescrit que la douane de Tanger ne percevra que les droits et impôts correspondants aux marchandises destinées à la consommation de la zone internationale. La taxe de 2½ est un impôt additionnel aux droits d'importation et, en raison des termes de l'article 20, ne peut bénéficier à la zone d'importation, mais à la zone de consommation. Aussi la zone espagnole ne peut-elle pas admettre de réserve sur ce point.
6. En ce qui concerne les taxes de consommation, le règlement serait fait conformément aux offres du 13 avril.
7. En cas de défaut de paiement de la part de l'Administration de Tanger des sommes dues pour l'arriéré, ou la contribution établie après deux trimestres, l'Administration de la zone espagnole se réserverait le droit de rétablir immédiatement les douanes intérieures.

En soumettant à l'Administration de Tanger ces bases dont l'acceptation serait le point de départ de nouvelles conversations, la zone espagnole ne cherche pas à différer le règlement de cette affaire, mais, au contraire, à l'avancer, car, une fois fixés clairement les termes de la question, on pourrait arriver rapidement à la signature de la convention opportune.

Si cette acceptation intervient, M. Valverde est disposé à partir pour Tanger dès qu'il en recevra l'avis.

Veuillez, &c.
Le Délégué général du Haut-Commissariat,
DIEGO SAAVEDRA.

Enclosure 2 in No. 50.

Draft Despatch from the Administrator of the Tangier Zone to the High Commissioner (Tetuan).

Tanger, le mai 1926.

M. le Délégué général,

PAR lettre en date du 27 avril dernier, vous avez bien voulu, en m'informant que l'Administration de la zone espagnole n'agréait point les propositions faites à M. Valverde pour le règlement de la question douanière, me faire connaître à quelles conditions elle serait disposée à reprendre les pourparlers et à supprimer le cordon douanier.

Je regrette qu'il n'ait pas paru possible à votre Administration de prendre comme base les propositions issues des conversations du 13 avril dernier avec M. Valverde—sauf à indiquer sur quels points ces propositions ne lui donnaient pas satisfaction. Pour aboutir à l'accord rapide que la zone de Tanger désire aussi vivement que l'Administration espagnole, il y aurait eu tout avantage à laisser la question sur le terrain où l'avait placée la conférence du 13 avril.

C'est pourquoi, au lieu d'examiner point par point les desiderata formulés par votre Administration, je m'efforcerai d'y présenter une réponse d'ensemble qui montre le peu d'écart subsistant au fond entre les demandes de votre zone et les propositions déjà faites au nom de Tanger.

Je suis heureux tout d'abord de constater que l'autorité espagnole donne son accord de principe au détachement, dans les postes de douane placés autour de Tanger, d'agents des douanes espagnoles chargés d'établir la statistique du mouvement commercial entre les deux zones, contradictoirement avec les agents des douanes de Tanger.

Il ne subsiste plus de divergences que sur l'emploi des statistiques ainsi dressées. Tandis que la zone de Tanger avait proposé que ces statistiques fussent arrêtées trimestriellement pour servir de base à des règlements trimestriels avec la zone espagnole, votre Administration demande qu'il ne soit effectué que des reversements provisoires sur la base de 30 pour cent de l'ensemble des recettes perçues par la douane de Tanger, jusqu'à ce que la mise en exploitation du chemin de fer de Tanger à Fez ait permis de compléter les données réunies par les bureaux de statistiques et d'aboutir à la détermination du pourcentage définitif à attribuer à la zone espagnole. Ce pourcentage serait alors appliqué rétroactivement à la revision des versements déjà faits par la zone de Tanger.

L'Administration tangéroise estime qu'une statistique du trafic commercial entre la zone de Tanger et la zone espagnole, de l'époque actuelle à celle où l'exploitation provisoire du chemin de fer de Tanger à Fez ait pu donner des résultats (c'est-à-dire de mai–juin 1926 à mai–juin 1927 au plus tôt), ne fournira aucun élément d'appréciation sur l'importance réelle du mouvement des marchandises entre les deux zones au cours du second semestre de 1925 et des premiers mois de l'année courante. On n'ignore point, en effet, la stagnation commerciale constatée à Tanger dans les derniers mois de 1925 sous l'influence de l'application de tarifs d'acconage très élevés et des restrictions apportées au commerce par le blocus des régions insoumises. Il est permis d'espérer que les progrès de la pacification, l'amélioration des conditions de débarquement des marchandises dans le port de Tanger et, enfin, la mise en exploitation de la voie ferrée modifieront entièrement, d'ici un an, ces conditions défavorables et que les relations commerciales entre les deux zones prendront une activité toute nouvelle.

C'est la raison pourquoi les experts douaniers réunis à la conférence de décembre dernier n'ont pas jugé possible qu'un forfait établi sur la base des résultats des derniers mois de 1925 tût appiqué sans revision au delà des six premiers mois de 1926. A plus forte raison, l'Administation de Tanger se trouve-t-elle dans l'impossibilité d'admettre

qu'un pourcentage basé sur les statistiques commerciales des mois à venir puisse être appliqué rétroactivement à un reversement à effectuer pour la période écoulée de juin 1925 à mai 1926. Elle est allée à la limite des concessions possibles en acceptant de régler les premiers mois de 1926 sur la base de la moyenne des douze mois ultérieurs; une modalité de ce genre ne peut évidemment pas être adoptée pour les sept derniers mois de 1925.

Le règlement des sommes revenant à la zone espagnole dans les recettes douanières encaissées à Tanger pendant cette période ne peut être effectué que sur la base des statistiques établies par la douane de Tanger, puisqu'il n'en existe pas d'autres. L'Administration tangéroise est, d'ailleurs, entièrement disposée à y procéder sur ces bases avant la fin du mois courant, comme le demande l'autorité espagnole.

Pour l'avenir, il semble qu'une fois en possession des statistiques établies contradictoirement dans les postes installés ou à installer autour de Tanger, les deux Administrations n'auront aucune raison de recourir à des règlements provisoires, et que rien ne les empêchera d'arrêter et de solder définitivement leurs comptes à la fin de chaque trimestre, comme l'exige une sage gestion de leurs finances respectives, dans lesquelles des paiements revisables à six mois ou un an de date introduiraient un élément d'incertitude fort gênant.

Telles sont, M. le Délégué général, les observations que je vous serais très obligé de transmettre aux services intéressés de votre Administration.

Je me plais à espérer qu'un accord sur ces différents points entre les deux zones est possible et même prochain, car j'ai le sentiment que les combinaisons envisagées sauvegardent entièrement les intérêts de la zone espagnole, et je demeure tout prêt à examiner les objections qui pourraient y être faites. Je m'excuse de ne pas répondre aux passages de votre lettre relatifs au cordon douanier, et à l'attribution des produits de la taxe spéciale, mais vous avez bien voulu me signaler que la zone espagnole ne pouvait accepter aucune discussion sur ces deux points. L'Administration de Tanger, de son côté, n'a plus à traiter de ces questions, puisqu'à la suite de l'instauration du cordon douanier l'Assemblée a prié, par l'entremise du Comité de Contrôle, les Puissances signataires du statut, d'examiner dans quel sens il convenait d'interpréter les dispositions de l'article 20 de la Convention de Paris.

Veuillez, &c.
P. ALBERGE.

[W 4208/76/28] No. 51.

M. de Fleuriau to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received May 15.)

SE référant à la lettre de son Excellence le principal Secrétaire d'État pour les Affaires étrangères, du 1er de ce mois, l'Ambassadeur de France a l'honneur de lui faire savoir que le Gouvernement français estime, comme le Gouvernement britannique, qu'il y aurait intérêt à ce que les trois Puissances signataires de la Convention de Tanger se concertent sur l'interprétation de l'article 20 du statut.

En conséquence, M. Briand a prescrit à l'Ambassadeur de France à Madrid de faire part au Gouvernement espagnol, après entente avec l'Ambassadeur de Sa Majesté, de la nécessité de cet examen concerté et de demander en même temps la suspension des mesures douanières adoptées à la frontière des deux zones pendant la discussion de la question de principe.

M. de Fleuriau saisit, &c.

Ambassade de France, Londres,
le 14 mai 1926.

[W 4138/76/28] No. 52.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to the Marquess of Crewe (Paris).

(No. 1492.) *Foreign Office, May 19, 1926.*

My Lord,

YOU will have learnt from the telegram sections of the recent establishment of a Spanish customs cordon around the Tangier zone, and of the request of the Committee of Control that the signatory Governments should furnish an interpretation of article 20 of the Tangier Convention.

2. The French Ambassador in London recently enquired whether His Majesty's Government had received the request of the Committee of Control, and, if so, what course they proposed to adopt. I replied that I had received and approved the request of the Committee of Control, and that I considered that it would be necessary for the three signatories of the Tangier Convention to concert in drawing up an interpretation of article 20. I added that I hoped shortly to be able to state the views of His Majesty's Government on the question, and that in the meantime I was instructing His Majesty's Ambassador at Madrid to press for the withdrawal of the customs cordon.

3. The enclosed memorandum expresses the views of His Majesty's Government on the interpretation of article 20. I request that your Lordship will communicate it to the French Government and enquire if they concur. You should explain that I am approaching them in the first instance because I desire, if possible, to reach agreement with the French Government before broaching the question with the Spanish Government.

I am, &c.
AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

Enclosure in No. 52.

Memorandum respecting Article 20 of the Tangier Convention.

HIS Majesty's Government learn from His Majesty's consul-general at Tangier that the Spanish customs cordon on the Tangier frontier is at present levying on *all* goods which pass into the Spanish zone a duty of 12½ per cent. *ad valorem*—*i.e.*, the maximum of 10 per cent. *ad valorem* and the *taxe spéciale* of 2½ per cent. imposed by the Act of Algeciras, to which further reference is made below.

2. Article 20 of the Tangier Convention clearly only entitles the Spanish authorities to levy duties on imported goods, and it is scarcely necessary to state that there is no justification whatever for their present action in levying duties on goods of Moroccan origin.

3. Goods imported into the Spanish zone through Tangier fall under two heads: first, those consigned in transit to the Spanish zone, and, secondly, those consigned to merchants in the Tangier zone, who subsequently sell them in small lots to clients in the Spanish zone. In the first case the procedure is simple: the goods benefit by the ordinary transit regulations and do not pay duty until they reach the zone to which they are consigned. In the second case the application of article 20 is somewhat more complicated. When the question was discussed at the Tangier Conference it was suggested either that the Spanish Customs should subsequently recover from the Tangier Customs the amount of duty already paid in respect of each particular consignment, or that an agreed lump sum should be paid by Tangier to the Spanish zone. The Spanish delegates expressed no definite opinion on the relative merits of these systems, and said that the matter would be adjusted between the Tangier and Spanish Customs. In any event, there is no justification for requiring goods to pay the same duties twice. All the Spanish authorities are entitled to do is to make arrangements with the Tangier Customs for the recovery of the duties which the latter have collected in respect of imported goods subsequently sent to the Spanish zone.

4. The third point on which a difference has arisen is the claim of the Spanish Customs that they are entitled to the *taxe spéciale* of 2½ per cent. in respect of all goods entering the Spanish zone from Tangier. This very point was discussed at the Tangier Conference in some detail. No verbatim record of the proceedings of the conference was kept, but the following extracts from the minutes represent the official record of the discussion:—

Fourteenth Meeting, November 24, 1923.

"MR. ROBERTSON et MR. VILLIERS seraient d'avis que les marchandises ou au moins certaines d'entre elles en transit à Tanger pour les deux autres zones paient la taxe spéciale de 2½ pour cent. L'absence de ces droits se ferait lourdement sentir dans le budget de la zone.

"M. DE SORBIER répond que si les marchandises en transit à Tanger payaient la taxe spéciale, ce serait au détriment des deux autres zones, qui n'accepteraient pas cette manière d'agir."

Fifteenth Meeting, November 25, 1923.

"MR. VILLIERS insiste de nouveau que la taxe de 2½ pour cent sur les marchandises en transit à Tanger lui soit abandonnée. Il s'agit de permettre à Tanger de vivre avec des ressources suffisantes.

"M. DE SORBIER répond que les zones espagnole et française se trouveraient frustrées et élèveraient des protestations. D'ailleurs, il sera pratiquement très difficile de percevoir une taxe de 2½ pour cent *ad valorem* sur le prix des marchandises dont on ne connaîtra la valeur que lorsqu'elles seront dédouanées dans les zones espagnole et française."

Seventeenth Meeting, November 26, 1923.

"Pour donner satisfaction au désir exprimé dans une précédente séance par Mr. Villiers, M. DE BEAUMARCHAIS propose l'abandon à la zone de Tanger du produit du droit de 2½ pour cent sur les tabacs importés par Tanger.

"La conférence se rallie à cette proposition et décide d'insérer dans l'article 17 un troisième paragraphe rédigé ainsi :

"'Le droit de 2½ pour cent dont sont passibles les tabacs importés par Tanger est intégralement acquis à la zone.'"

It will be seen from the above that the British delegates made an effort to secure that the proceeds of the *taxe spéciale*, even on goods in transit, should be handed over t otheTangier Administration. The Spanish delegates took no part in the discussion, but, in view of the opposition of the French delegates, the British proposal was withdrawn on the understanding that an exception should be made in the case of tobacco in transit. The language of the British delegates and the argument used by M. de Sorbier at the fifteenth meeting indicate that it was understood that in the case of goods consigned to Tangier, as opposed to those in transit, the *taxe spéciale* should be retained by the Tangier Customs, even if the goods were subsequently forwarded to the Spanish zone. Had this not been the case, either the French or Spanish delegates would certainly have pointed out that not only was the Tangier zone not entitled to the *taxe spéciale* in respect of goods in transit, but that the zone was also obliged to surrender the proceeds of the *taxe spéciale* levied on goods imported into Tangier and subsequently re-exported into another zone.

5. The last point to be considered is that of the consumption taxes. It is clearly equitable that the consumption taxes should be levied by the authorities of the zone in which the goods are consumed, and although the point is not specifically dealt with in the Tangier Convention, it appears in accordance with its spirit that Spanish authorities should obtain the proceeds of the consumption tax on all imported goods which pass from Tangier into the Spanish zone. In the case of goods which are not in transit, the proper procedure would be for the Spanish Customs to recover from Tangier the amount of the consumption duties already levied by the Tangier Customs.

6. To sum up, the Spanish Customs are entitled to levy no duties whatever on goods of Moroccan origin; goods in transit to the Spanish zone benefit by the transit regulations and pay customs duties, the *taxe spéciale* and consumption duties to the Spanish Customs on their arrival in the Spanish zone; as regards goods consigned to Tangier and subsequently forwarded to the Spanish zone, the Spanish Customs are entitled to recover from Tangier the amount of the customs duties and the consumption duties levied by the Tangier Customs, but they are not entitled to the proceeds of the *taxe spéciale*.

7. The only solution of the present difficulty is to fix an agreed percentage of the Tangier customs receipts to be paid to the Spanish Customs. This agreed percentage should be subject to revision in the light of the latest statistics at least every six months, when an adjustment should be made of the debit and credit balance of the two zones for the preceding period.

[W 5643/76/28] No. 53.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Mr. Phipps (Paris).

(No. 1806.) *Foreign Office, June* 22, 1926.

Sir,

IN my despatch No. 1689 of the 11th instant I forwarded to Lord Crewe a copy of a telegram from His Majesty's consul-general at Tangier stating that a customs agreement had been signed by representatives of the Tangier and Spanish zones. I hoped that the agreement would receive the early approval of the Spanish Government and that the whole question of the Spanish customs cordon could be regarded as settled. Unfortunately the Spanish Government have made a complete *volte-face*, and now refuse to approve the agreement on the ground that it involves the maintenance of customs posts for statistical purposes, an arrangement which they particularly desire to avoid. They propose that the Tangier Administration should now pay a lump sum of 25 per cent. of their customs receipts and that a definite period of two or three years should be fixed during which the sum paid should continue to be at the rate of 25 per cent., subject to revision at the end of such period.

2. In a note, of which I enclose a copy,* the French Ambassador states that his Government is disposed to agree to the proposal of the Spanish Government, and he enquires whether His Majesty's Government concur.

3. His Majesty's consul-general at Tangier and his French colleague take a different view, and in a joint telegram, a copy of which is enclosed,* they state the reasons for which they consider the Spanish offer to be inacceptable. I entirely agree with Mr. Clive, and I request that you will so inform the French Government, who will doubtless be ready to reconsider the question in the light of the telegram which they will have received from their representative at Tangier.

4. There remains the question of the disposal of the proceeds of the *taxe spéciale*. I enclose a copy of two despatches from His Majesty's consul-general at Tangier,* from which you will see that, even if agreement is reached between the authorities of the Spanish and Tangier zones regarding the customs cordon, the question of the *taxe spéciale* will be reserved pending a decision of the three signatories of the Tangier Convention. I request that you will call the attention of the French Government to the matter and press for a reply to the communication which you will have addressed to them on receipt of my despatch No. 1492 of the 19th ultimo. You should lay stress on the deplorable effect which the Spanish demand, if conceded, would have on the budget of the Tangier zone, which the fall of the franc has already gravely prejudiced.

I am, &c.
AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

(e.) Administration of the Natives.

[W 1552/1552/28] No. 54.

Consul-General Clive to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(*Received February* 26.)

(No. 38. Confidential.) *Tangier, February* 18, 1926.

Sir,

ARTICLE 25 of the Tangier Statute runs as follows :—

"Inasmuch as the autonomy of the zone cannot prejudice the sovereign rights of His Majesty the Sultan, nor his prestige and prerogatives as head of the Mussulman community of the Empire and as head of the Shereefian family residing in Tangier, the administration of the native population and of Mussulman interests in the zone as well as the administration of justice shall continue to be exercised, with respect for traditional forms, by a Moroccan staff directly appointed by the Sultan and under the control of his agents."

* Not printed.

2. For some time past rumours have been current that all was not well with the native administration, or, rather, with the agents controlling it. These, in fact, resolve themselves into the person of one individual, M. Courtin, a Frenchman of uncertain origin and semi-Algerian parentage, who had acted for a time as dragoman at the French Legation, and returned here from the French protectorate in the autumn of 1924 with a reputation for considerable intelligence but doubtful morals. I had occasion soon after my arrival in Tangier to refer to some sharp practice on the part of M. Courtin in connection with the Jewish dahirs (see my despatch No. 355 of the 12th November, 1924).

3. Ten days ago the leading Spanish paper, the "Heraldo de Marruecos," came out with an article attacking M. Courtin for having refused permission to their reporter to visit the native prison This was taken up by the "Porvenir" in a much stronger article the following day, and on the 13th February the British "Moghreb-al-Aksa" published an article questioning the whole position of M. Courtin, who, far from being a discreet and invisible controller, was said to be openly usurping the functions of the Mendoub. Natives who wished to see the latter were invariably received by M. Courtin, who dealt with their requests as he thought fit. Yesterday the French daily, the "Dépêche marocaine," replied to these attacks in an article (which I subsequently learnt was composed by M. Courtin and the editor in the former's office) stoutly defending M. Courtin and eulogising his tact and courtesy, which had won general admiration.

4. I should not have troubled you with these polemics of the local press had not this matter, which is one of considerable interest to Tangier, had a somewhat deeper significance.

5. A few days ago I met the Mendoub at a large charity entertainment. In the course of conversation he told me that he was shortly going away for a month to visit his relations at Fez, and said he would be very pleased to see me before he left. I accordingly arranged to call on him at his private house on the 17th, and, in order not to make my visit appear in any way official, I asked Mr. Irwin to accompany me as interpreter instead of Mr. Hope Gill.

6. After an exchange of the usual compliments, tea was brought in, which his Excellency said he was going to make himself as a mark of special honour to his guest and to avoid the necessity of servants constantly running in and out. He then proceeded to unburden himself. His position, he said, had become intolerable, and was beneath the dignity of any self-respecting man, and if things were to go as at present he had no intention of returning to Tangier. M. Courtin simply ignored him and did whatever he liked. Native justice was a farce. He, the Mendoub, could not even see the files. M. Courtin decided everything. Cases were very often dismissed, and his Excellency hinted vaguely that lack of evidence or the inadequacy of the offence were not always the sole reason which induced M. Courtin to adopt a lenient view. At the same time, he professed to act in the name of the Mendoub and on the latter's responsibility.

7. I enquired what had been the position when he was Kadi at Fez. His Excellency replied that a French assessor had always been present in court, but had never interfered with him. The French official was merely there to see that justice was properly administered. It will be remembered that Bou Ashreen, before coming here as Mendoub, bore a high reputation as a just and honest judge in Fez, and that His Majesty's vice-consul testified to his high character.

8. His Excellency then referred to the question of native charities. A small percentage of certain taxes was devoted to this purpose, his Excellency said, amounting to some 500 fr. a day, or about 200,000 fr. a year. He had been urging that the accounts should be open to inspection, and that the money should be administered by a committee. M. Courtin had always refused, and said it was quite sufficient that the money should be given to the Nadir of Habous (head of the Moslem religious foundation in Tangier) for distribution. M. Courtin and the Nadir were on very intimate terms, and his Excellency considered the arrangement most unsatisfactory, and one to which he had not given, and would not give, his approval.

9 I asked him whether his main grievance was simply against M. Courtin, or whether it was against the article in the statute which entrusted native affairs in Tangier to the sole control of the French. "No," he replied, he was not complaining of the statute, which, if interpreted in the proper spirit, could be made to work satisfactorily. His complaint was against M. Courtin. He had decided to relinquish his post unless M. Courtin was removed. He spoke highly of the French consul-general, who was an entirely honest man, and who, he believed, knew all about

M. Courtin, but probably did not like to say anything at Rabat. He liked Captain Panabières, the head of the French tabor, and M. Palazat, the head of the police, who were both good men. He admitted he did not like M. Alberge, who lately had become very intimate with M. Courtin.

10. After begging me not to repeat a word of what he had said, he told me in great confidence that he had just heard that the Rabat authorities were privately sending up someone to enquire into the whole matter. He had accordingly decided to postpone his departure until he had had an opportunity of seeing this official.

11. This last piece of information is interesting, as I have no idea on whose representation M. Steeg has decided to make an enquiry into the goings on of M. Courtin. He appears to be clearing out a great many officials of the old régime, among whom, I am told, is M. Marc, Director of the Shereefian Control Department and brother-in-law of M. Courtin, to whom the latter is said to owe his present appointment.

12. The refusal of the Mendoub to return to Tangier would of course be damaging to the French, as he is generally popular and held in high esteem by Europeans and natives, and it may well be that rumours of his intended resignation having reached Rabat, the Resident-General is losing no time in enquiring into the causes.

13. This morning I happened to meet Sid-el-Menebhi, and I asked him, without mentioning my interview with the Mendoub, whether he had heard these reports about M. Courtin. Menebhi said the Mendoub had himself spoken to him more than once on the subject, and had even asked him to pass on what he said to me, but he (Menebhi) had not done so because he wished to keep himself entirely outside politics, and he would not have said anything now if I had not asked him. What upset the Mendoub most was that M. Courtin kept doing everything himself, completely ignoring the Sultan's representative, while at the same time letting it be known that he was acting on the full authority and responsibility of his Excellency. This, it was true, no longer deceived people, and M. Courtin was not only cordially disliked, but universally suspected by the Moors, who had only to see him to know that he was not honest.

14. I am well aware that it is an extremely invidious and delicate task to complain to a foreign Government of one of their officials, and I am not suggesting this should be done, nor have I mentioned the matter to my French colleague. I only hope that the enquiry to be set on foot by Rabat may bear fruit, but, should the Mendoub persist in his intention to resign and M. Courtin remain on here in his present capacity, I consider it by no means unlikely that the recent press attacks will be renewed and the matter brought to a head. I shall not fail, therefore, to keep you fully informed of the position.

(Copies of this despatch have been sent to Rabat and Fez.)

I have, &c.
R. H. CLIVE.

[W 2748/1552/28] No. 55.

Mr. Clive to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(*Received April* 1.)

(No. 60.)

Sir, *Tangier, March* 25, 1926.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 38 of the 18th February, I have the honour to report that the Mendoub left Tangier on the 28th February. A few days later it was rumoured that his Excellency, on arrival at Rabat, had sent in his resignation, and I took an opportunity one day when meeting my French colleague to enquire if this was true. M. Feit professed complete ignorance and said that he could not believe for a moment that the Mendoub had resigned.

2. As his Excellency had told me that he was going to Fez to stay for some little time, and as he was already acquainted with Colonel Mackereth, His Majesty's vice-consul, I sent the latter a telegram to ask whether he could find an opportunity to ascertain what exactly was the position and what had been the result of M. Mercier's visit—the official referred to in paragraph 10 of my despatch under reference, who had been sent to enquire into the complaint against M. Courtin.

3. His Majesty's consul-general at Rabat has been good enough to forward to me a copy of a despatch he has received from Colonel Mackereth regarding an interview he had with the Mendoub. I have the honour to enclose a copy.

4. A few days ago, in the course of a conversation with Captain Panabières, the latter told me that M. Courtin would shortly be replaced. He believed his successor was already designated, but a decent interval would probably be allowed to lapse before his appointment. This information was confirmed to me in a telegram which I received from Colonel Mackereth yesterday, in which he added that the Mendoub would return to Tangier after Ramadan (*i.e.*, about the 15th April). This morning M. Feit, who had himself been instrumental in causing the enquiry to be made, told me that M. Courtin had sent in his resignation.

5. This incident is instructive. The French authorities appear to have yielded in the matter to the protest of a Moorish official against a corrupt and unpopular Frenchman, which protests, though unknown to the public at the time, were echoed by the local British and Spanish press in Tangier. Public opinion would happily appear, therefore, to have some weight even in a matter which is solely within the competence of the French authorities. I am inclined to think at the same time that my French colleague is considerably relieved at the removal of M. Courtin. For some little time past the French colony in Tangier have divided themselves into two camps, one including Captain Panabières and the more moderate elements in the French colony who support the consul-general, the other consisting of M. Courtin, M. Alberge and M. Saurin, the French Vice-President of the Assembly. The relations between M. Feit and M. Alberge have never been intimate. M. Feit does not hesitate to criticise M. Alberge unsparingly to me, and I have reason to suppose that he has hinted in Rabat that his departure would not be unwelcome. M. Saurin is a clever French lawyer devoid of principles and easily susceptible to flattery. With the departure of M. Courtin, M. Feit might be able to bring him round to his side.

6. It must be remembered that the appointments both of M. Alberge and of M. Courtin were made in the latter days of the Lyautey régime when M. de Sorbiet was still all-powerful in such matters, and I have no doubt whatever in my own mind that the prospects of the statute would be considerably enhanced if the Rabat authorities saw fit to replace M. Alberge by a more capable administrator and a more congenial personality.

I have, &c.
R. H. CLIVE.

Enclosure in No. 55.

Vice-Consul Mackereth to Sir A. Ryan.

(No. 51. Confidential.)

Fez, March 12, 1926.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that during the visit to Fez of the Mendoub of Tangier, Sidi-el-Haj Mohammed Bou Ashreen, I have had the opportunity of having with him several long conversations, during which his Excellency discussed with the utmost frankness and absence of reserve his position in Tangier. His views are in no wise secret and were not unknown amongst his friends in Fez some time before he left Tangier on leave. The Mendoub spoke with gratitude and much feeling of the kindnesses he had received at the hands of Mr. Clive and Sir Basil Scott in Tangier. He also said that M. Feit, to whom he had explained his difficulties in January, had treated him with great sympathy, and that it was on M. Feit's urgent representations that M. Mercier was sent to Tangier to enquire into the state of affairs in connection with the mendoubia.

2. In the matter of his relations with M. Courtin the Mendoub only touched upon one incident of importance that was not mentioned in Mr. Clive's despatch No. 38 of the 18th February. It seems that M. Courtin was desirous at one time of introducing certain reforms into the management of the native prison at Tangier. These reforms required additional money which the authorities at Rabat when approached by M. Courtin were disinclined to grant. Upon M. Courtin's assurance, given without the knowledge of the Mendoub, that sufficient money to cover the increased cost of the prisons could be collected by introducing new taxes on the natives, such as taxes on passports and visas, the French Protectorate Government

finally agreed to advance money for these reforms, and M. Courtin brought in the taxes. The Mendoub believes that a considerable amount of this money granted was misapplied. Another sore point appears to have been M. Courtin's refusal ever to accept the Mendoub's suggestions in regard to letters written to Rabat, and also that he was never allowed himself to write direct to the Sultan or the Sultan's Ministers. His letters through the post were invariably opened at Tangier.

3. He said that Mr. Clive had asked him to give him any news concerning his position that he might have after his visit to Rabat. As he could not trust the post, he had taken the liberty of calling on you, Sir, in the company of Idriss Ben Chokron, who had been asking his opinion of his case against Maj Omar-el-Tazi. He has already given you what little news he had in the hope that it could thus be transmitted, if you saw fit, to Mr. Clive at Tangier. It therefore seems unnecessary that I should deal with the object and conduct of M. Mercier's visit to Tangier.

4. On leaving my house yesterday evening, the Mendoub said that if any further development took place he would let me know, and he would ask me to communicate news of them to Mr. Clive.

5. As I have never met M. Courtin, and have thus never been in a position to form an opinion regarding him, I have not previously ventured to acquaint you with the reputation that he earned during eighteen months' term as "chef des services municipaux" in Fez during 1918–19. Almost as soon as I took up my duties in Fez (in 1923) I heard this gentleman spoken of as the worst and most dishonest of the many officials who had held the position as head of the municipal services in Fez since the French occupation. He is accused by the natives of being brazenly corrupt, and in this direction his wife has earned an equal notoriety. His apparent treatment of the Mendoub bears a very close resemblance to that which he meted out to the Majlis at Fez, and which, I am told, led to such violent protests to Marshal Lyautey that he was recalled to the coast. Native opinion places M. Courtin's continued employment by the Protectorate Government to a blood relationship existing between Mesdames Lyautey and Courtin. It is also said that Mme. Courtin and Mme. Steeg are related.

6. The fact that the Mendoub was already aware of M. Courtin's reputation may, I think, have made him less tolerant of his "adviser's" attitude.

7. Popular rumour indicates Si Tayeb-el-Mokri and Si Mohamed Tazi as intriguing rivals for the post of Mendoub, and both anxious for the downfall of Bou Ashreen. Tayeb-el-Mokri is rich and a son of the Grand Vizir (see my despatch No. 108 of the 3rd November, 1924), whilst Mohamed Tazi relies on the support that his friendship with M. Courtin may be able to supply.

I have, &c.
GILBERT MACKERETH.

P.S. *March* 13, 1926.—I have just received your despatch No. 48, and as the Mendoub did not deal, during his visit to you, with M. Mercier's visit, I will add the information that Bou Ashreen gave me on this point:—

1. M. Mercier came to Tangier consequent upon a report from M. Feit regarding the friction that had arisen between the Mendoub and his adviser.

2. The Mendoub asked him to make his enquiries, not among the officials of the mendoubia, but to examine the records and consult the important citizens of Tangier, Moorish and other.

3. M. Mercier carried out his examination, and before he left he told Bou Ashreen that he (Bou Ashreen) was right in having put the matter before M. Feit, and that there was no occasion for him to resign.

4. Bou Ashreen told me that he would not go back to Tangier at the end of his leave unless Courtin was transferred or else given different instructions; he could not conscientiously do his duties if he were not allowed, as Sultan's representative, to control what went on in the mendoubia. He did not wish merely to be a figurehead under the thumb of a French controller.

G. M.

(f.) Effect of the Tangier Convention on the System of Protection.

[W 11596/2647/28] No. 56.

Foreign Office to Mr. Clive (Tangier).

(No. 11.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 9, 1926.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Austen Chamberlain to acknowledge receipt of your despatch No. 340 of the 11th ultimo on the subject of the status in the various zones of Morocco of British protégés and former protégés.

2. The Secretary of State concurs in your suggestion that Mr. Hope-Gill should pay a visit to Rabat in order to try to reach an agreement with the French authorities on the basis of the British thesis by means of a personal conversation with M. Rageot. The essential point to be secured is that former protégés shall, in the French and Spanish zones of Morocco, be justiciable in the British consular courts and that conversely British protégés from the French and Spanish zones shall, at Tangier, be justiciable in the Mixed Tribunal. Provided that this desideratum is secured, Sir Austen Chamberlain is content to leave to your discretion the exact details of the agreement with the French protectorate authorities.

I am, &c.
R. H. CAMPBELL.

[W 2513/1064/28] No. 57.

Mr. Ryan to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received March 25.)

(No. 42.)

HIS Majesty's consul-general presents his compliments to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs at London, and has the honour to transmit herewith copy of despatch No. 20 to Mr. Clive, Tangier, respecting British protégés in the French zone of Morocco

Rabat, March 17, 1926.

Enclosure in No. 57.

Consul-General Ryan to Mr. Clive.

(No. 20.)

Sir, *Rabat, March* 17, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your despatch No. 13 of the 27th February, in which you transmitted to me a copy of Foreign Office despatch No. 50 of the 13th February relative to the proposed visit of Mr. Hope-Gill to Rabat to discuss the question of the status in the French zone of persons formerly enjoying British protection in Tangier, and asked me to inform you when I considered the visit opportune.

2. When I first broached this subject in conversation with the head of the Cabinet diplomatique early in February, I was under the impression that the Residency-General had sent a fresh report on the subject to Paris during my absence on leave. I gathered from what M. Lavondès said that this was not the case, and that the report which he had mentioned to Mr. Bird related to the independent question of the status in Tangier itself of the families of ex-protégés. On my referring on this occasion to Mr. Hope-Gill's projected visit, M. Lavondès seemed to have no objection to discussing with that officer the question of the status in this zone of the persons involved. Our conversation was, however, merely an incidental one, as up to that time I had only seen in print the Foreign Office despatch approving your proposal to send Mr. Hope-Gill here.

3. Since receiving your despatch under reference I have had two more definite conversations with M. Lavondès. He takes up the position that the note addressed to you by Marshal Lyautey on the 5th August represented the views not merely of the Residency-General but of the French Government, and that it would therefore

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be impossible to go back on them in any discussion here. I pointed out that Mr. Hope-Gill would come as an expert, the question being one which specially concerned persons living in Tangier, and that there might well be an advantage in reviewing the rival theses in an oral discussion before any further official notes passed. Even when I put the matter in this light M. Lavondès expressed doubts as to whether any useful purpose would be served, as he would be precluded from departing in any way from the attitude taken up last August with the express approval of the French Government. Eventually he said that if Mr. Hope-Gill did come here he would of course see him, but could only be a listener.

4. M. Lavondès reiterated the contention that the question was of little or no practical importance. He held that concrete cases were so unlikely to arise, and the views of the two Governments on the question of principle so difficult to reconcile, that much the best thing, in his personal opinion, would be to leave the dispute unsettled. He felt this all the more, as he thought it ungracious of His Majesty's Government to reject so lightly the spontaneous offer of the protectorate to make the persons involved justiciable in the French courts, when by a strict application of the strongly held view of the French they might have been made subject to the native courts. I replied that the question, though not perhaps of capital importance, appeared to us to have some practical interest, and that, if resentment were felt at the unwillingness of His Majesty's Government to accept the jurisdiction of the French courts, this was really part of a much larger question, namely, that of our whole attitude regarding the suppression of capitulatory privileges.

5. It is for consideration, in view of these conversations, whether any result is likely to be achieved by Mr. Hope-Gill's coming to Rabat or whether it would not be better either to resume here in Rabat the official correspondence which ended last year with Marshal Lyautey's note to you of the 5th August or to take up the question with the French Government in Paris. My own view has been throughout that nothing short of strong diplomatic pressure on the French Government will carry the question beyond its present point. I did at one time think that it might be possible to join this question with that of the status of families of "ex-Tangier protégés" and reach an agreement by each of the two Governments yielding on one of them. I now feel that, whatever may be the eventual attitude of the French regarding the question of families (as to which I expect to receive very shortly a reply to the memorandum enclosed in my despatch to you, No. 144, of the 21st September), the French will adhere very stubbornly to their view regarding the cessation in the French zone of the protection of persons who formerly enjoyed British protection in the Tangier zone.

6. Should it be decided to send Mr. Hope-Gill here in spite of what M. Lavondès has said to me, I anticipate no difficulty in placing him in communication with that gentleman, and probably with M. Rageot, at any time suitable to you from now onwards.

7. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the Secretary of State.

I have, &c.
ANDREW RYAN.

(g.) Gambling.

[W 5828/76/28] No. 58.

Mr. Clive to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received June 24.)

(No. 137.)

Sir, *Tangier, June* 17, 1926.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 81 of the 19th April and previous despatches on the vexed question of gambling in Tangier, I have the honour to report that the Legislative Assembly recently passed a unanimous resolution begging the Committee of Control to withdraw the interdiction on gambling enjoined by article 52 of the statute on the understanding that a proper regulation of control should be enacted, which regulation would of course require the approval of the committee.

2. The resolution came before the Committee of Control at their last meeting, and a note, of which copy is enclosed, was drawn up for submission to the respective Governments.